The All-America Football Team

Collier's

December 24, 1932

WEEKLY

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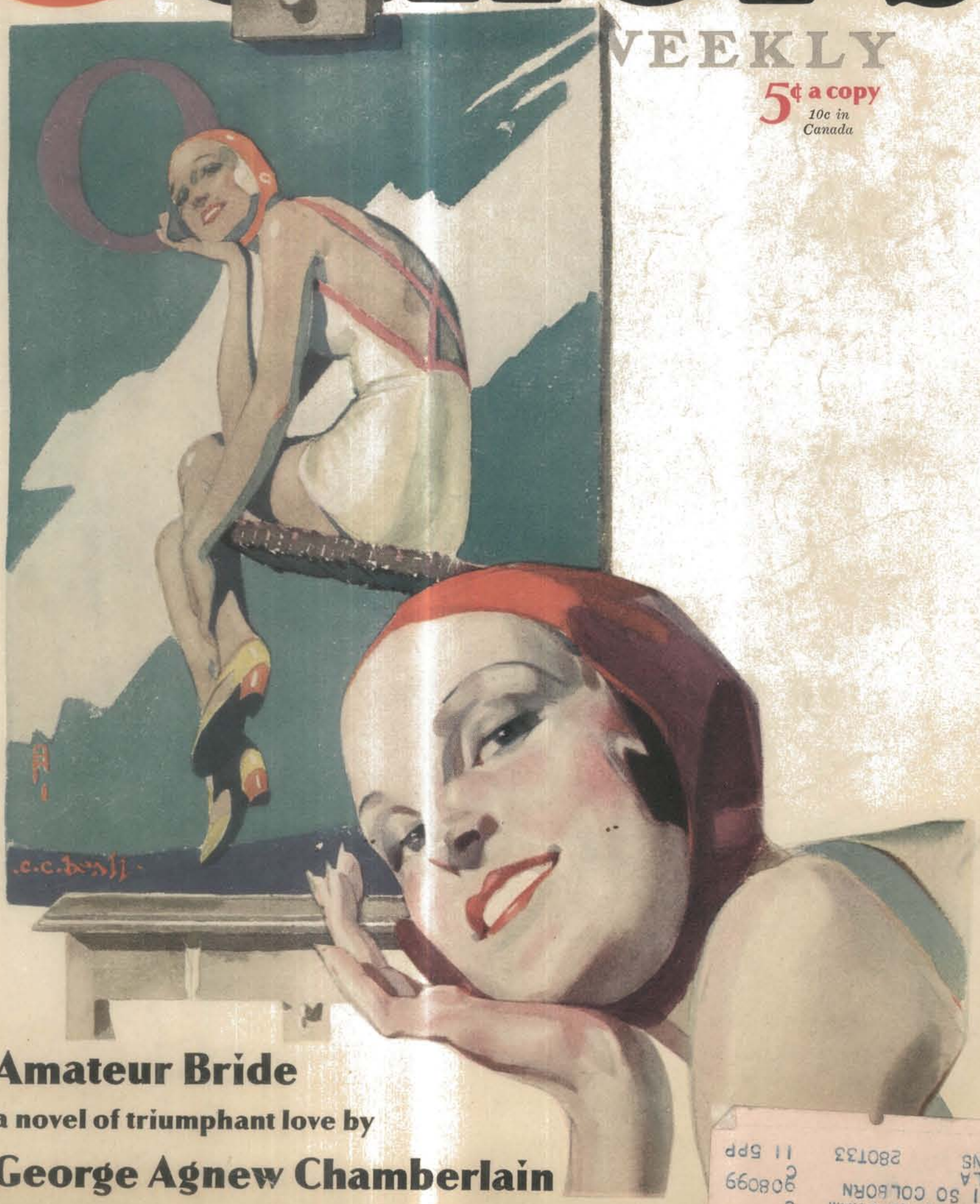

Amateur Bride

a novel of triumphant love by

George Agnew Chamberlain

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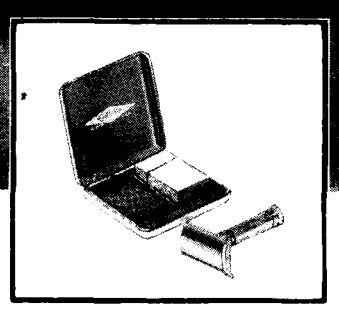

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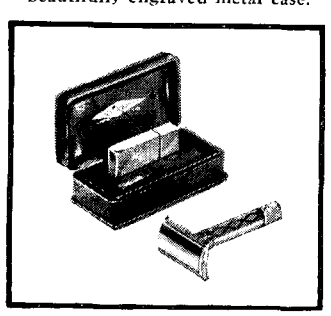

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Collier's
THE NATIONAL WEEKLY

Next Week

DANCING DAN is such a guy as always seems to be getting a great belt out of life, but many citizens question his judgment in dancing so much with Miss Muriel O'Neill, who works in the Half Moon night club.

And the reason they question his judgment in this respect is because everybody knows that Miss Muriel O'Neill is a doll who is very well thought of by Heine Schmitz, and Heine Schmitz is not such a guy as will take kindly to anybody dancing more than once and a half with a doll that he thinks well of. In fact, Dancing Dan is not only way out of line but he is knocking his own price down to no price at all.

Damon Runyon, the scribe, tells you what happened on "Dancing Dan's Christmas."

COME into the Beauty Shop. This is something out of the usual run. It belongs to the Unemployed Citizens League of Seattle. Nice, isn't it? Well-equipped, modern, efficient.

There's nothing irrelevant about this unemployment activity. It's a regular part of the League's program, and its purpose is to keep up the morale of the League's women members. The morale of the men is pretty high anyway. They've got a going concern on their hands and they're busier than ever before.

The League embraces all the activities of a community, from industry and finance to art and philosophy. And it's all done by men who have lost their jobs. "They Help Themselves." Walter Davenport shows you how.

IF YOU were a movie executive and suddenly needed a trained duck, a parrot which could swear in Swedish, or a high-wheeled bicycle, Alfred Dunderdale Forbes would be your man. But if you wanted to meet some woman, Mr. Forbes would be a dead loss to you. Mr. Forbes doesn't know any. That is, he didn't know any until he met Naomi Daughty. Then he fell in love, but it took the threatening presence of a hungry lion to make him say anything about it. Weed Dickinson tells you about this resourceful young man who was "Woman-Shy."

HAROLD LAMB tells the colorful story of "The Eighth Wife." T. R. Ybarra takes you to a review of all the armies—private and official—of Germany. Marie Beynon Ray gives you expert advice about throwing a party. Zane Grey, amid the tumult of a landslide, brings "Thunder Mountain" to a thoroughly satisfying close. George Agnew Chamberlain shows you the development of John Wright's inflexible purpose. And there are others. Merry Christmas to you!

This Week

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December 24, 1932

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●

Any Week

MR. BART SCULLY of Indianapolis, Indiana, spent a pleasant evening at a carnival not long ago. Among the attractions was a small but smelly menagerie supervised by a weary trouper who was having quite an argument with a patron who insisted upon making disparaging remarks about the lion.

"All right, sir," said the menagerie man, "if you think that lion's too old to stand up why not walk into the cage? Come, sir; I will go with you."

"Sure he won't bite my head off?" jeered the critic.

"If he doesn't," said the keeper, "I'll beat his off."

HAVING had a bit of leisure on hand for the first time in years, Mr. Aaron S. Hamische of San Francisco has mingled with his fellow men, prodding their "subconsciencciousness" and penetrating their secret longings. And he finds: "We are suffering less from depression than repression. For twenty years this country has heaped shall-nots and must-nots upon us until we have little or no more freedom of thought or action. In tariffs, in regulations and prohibitions we have suffocated the soul of our citizens. We have lost our privilege of smiling and the wherewithal to laugh. Abolish a few score of these moral and economic restrictions and free us. And then with our leg-irons and handcuffs stricken off we shall rise, walk about and prove man's superiority to unnatural conditions. This is the way to freedom, happiness and prosperity."

THE football season fetched its usual allotment of controversial letters regarding the relative merits, as sport, of English, Canadian and American football. We can't profess to be a competent judge. But recently we saw the Canadian game played in Toronto and our advice to any lad engaging in that game is to ignore absolutely anyone offering him a chance to carry the ball. We would do it if we had to but only in a large army tank.

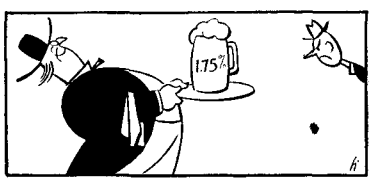
SEEMS that we misspelled Mississippi lately, leaving an i or something out of it. So we're taken severely to task by Mr. E. Roy Taylor of Meridian, who adds that the name of his state is locally pronounced, Miss-ippi, "thereby eliminating one *i* and several political asses, particularly now that Governor Mike Conner is at the helm."

AND Mr. George M. Luscamp of Memphis, Tennessee, notifies us that he has joined the Silver Lining Brigade. Some months ago he lost a decision to the United States Government in an argument over his "bad debts deductions" in his income-tax return. And now he wants to know what Washington is going to do about those "bad European debts."

MRS. THERESE T. MALISSE of Washington, D. C., wants it understood that she is not a red radical and that she "neither understands nor sympathizes with Russian Communism." Nevertheless she announces that "it is no wonder that the government refuses to recognize Russia. Did you see where Moscow threw 25,000 political desk-job patriots out and made them go to work on the farms and in the mines and factories? Naturally a civilized nation like ours wouldn't do anything as barbarous as that to our steam-heated and double-chinned politicians. It might reduce expenditures too close to our income."

"AS I UNDERSTAND it," says Mr. Saxon Sayre of San Antonio, Texas, "the reason we don't get any of this government economy we hear so much about during presidential campaigns is that we haven't got the money to pay for the investigations of the commissions appointed to find out how much we could save if we abolished all the commissions we don't need."

IN ADDITION to the troubles it already expects, Congress will have the deep-seated doubt of Mr. Larry Pritchett of Lincoln, Nebraska. "Yes, yes," scoffs Mr. Pritchett, "I know. I will bet a dollar against one of Mr. Hoover's campaign speeches that after fighting all over the lot Congress passes a beer bill raising the Volstead ante to 1.75 and expects it to balance the budget."



AND as for those who expect this lame-duck or even the broadly advertised new Congress to produce something besides politics, Mrs. Alfred R. Fisch of Utica, New York, prophesies that both bodies will cost more to keep in session than we will get out of them.

"CONGRATULATE me," cries Mr. Price Oestricher of Camden, New Jersey. "I am all paid up at last on some stock I bought in a hotel that was never built."

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A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR GROWN-UPS —WITH 52 ENCORES

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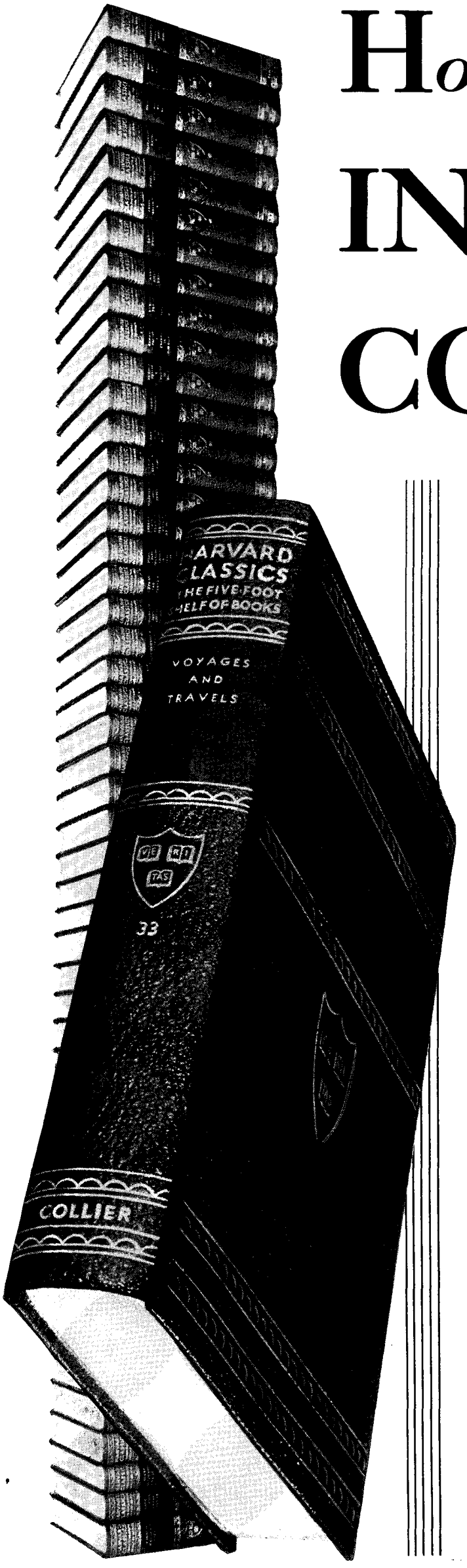

How to get rid of an INFERIORITY COMPLEX

A true story of a man who found that self-confidence is not a matter of education or luck

HE WAS GOOD in his job. No one denied that. But he felt inferior to his associates. Most of them were college men. He envied them the mysterious thing called "background."

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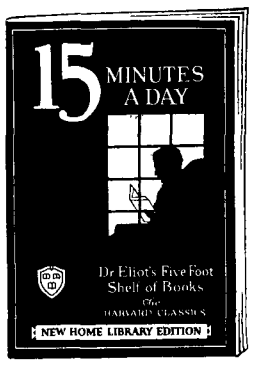

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GEORGE AGNEW CHAMBERLAIN

Beginning an absorbing new novel, the story of a girl who married to get away from love, but married the wrong man

Amateur Bride

Her thoughts were free to wander. Dancing with this stranger, she could be dancing with any man or with the god of her dreams

JOHN WRIGHT'S eyes roved around the lovely room. He hated a dinner given for a business motive. Add that it was large, mixed, and occurred in a public place, and his dislike verged on abhorrence. Well—semi-public, anyway. It was one of those clubs that keep on opening in New York with the intention of remaining exclusive. Some of them do—for a year or two. But when they cross the line into the red, it is only a question of weeks before the big spenders with ten-dollar tips for a table step back into their own. This layout was still choosy, but he knew it must be hanging on by an eyelash because there were so many big dinners, sure sign that the members were rallying to a dying cause.

Parties of eight were on the small side. Sixteen was barely noticeable. Twenty began to mean something. But tonight there were three in the thirty class and one so large that it reminded him of a convention. He tried to comfort himself with the thought that he had no more than nineteen table companions. That wouldn't be so bad if there were nobody else in the room. But he was too big—tall, not round—for this sort of place. He couldn't move without making a show of himself. Being a smooth dancer and still in your thirties—the very late thirties—didn't help much when you were six feet two with shoulders to match. How much would he give to walk out on his host? A hundred—two hundred? Idle speculation. He couldn't. He was the guest of honor.

WHAT a fool Burnham was! This party would cost him a pretty penny which he might just as well have saved. Wright had promised him an answer tomorrow. He had said he would tell him by eleven o'clock whether he would accept a fee of fifty thousand to go to Korea. Fifty thousand had been half his asking price, but he had been promised a cut in the prospect, if he wanted it, in addition. Well—he had known all along he would go. He was sick of New York. He was itching for slouch hat, flannel shirt, breeches and hobnailed boots laced halfway to the knee. What did Burnham take him for? Somebody who could be impressed by the fat division of the Social Register? Then he was twice a fool. If he had known how to play his cards he could have had his report for nothing.

"It's absolutely unique," Mrs. Burnham was saying with painful insistence.

"What's unique?" asked Wright, rousing himself.

"This place!" wailed his hostess.

He realized she must have been trying to get his attention for some time. "Oh, yes," he murmured. "Quite."

"That's so English—quite. Are you English, Mr. Wright?"

"No. American. They made Eve out of a rib but I was carved out of a granite hogback in Connecticut. The hill is gone now," he continued without a smile; "you can scarcely find what's left of it."

"That's interesting," said Mrs. Burnham vaguely. "I was saying this place is unique," she repeated in desperation. "Where else in New York can you sit down to dinner at half past nine as you do in every restaurant in Paris? I was awfully glad to be able to get some of the people who are here to meet you. Do you know who that is on Mr. Burnham's right?"

"No," said Wright, his hurried glance rebounding from a mountain of fat. He wanted to add, "Don't tell me," but restrained himself.

"It's Mrs. Forbes Delamont."

"Really?" said Wright with a spark of interest. "I used to know Forbes."

"You used to know him? He's still very much alive. Why don't you know him now?"

"Too slimy," said Wright with overwhelming casualness. "In business, I mean." His blue eyes twinkled at the consternation in her face. "I notice he isn't here tonight."

"No," said Mrs. Burnham shortly, "he isn't. That's why we have an extra woman."

"When you see him, if you do see him," said Wright deliberately, "please tell him what I said. I'd hate to have you think I minded his knowing how I feel."

SHE turned from him in anger mingled with despair. If Harford Burnham ever did this sort of thing to her again she would divorce him. No, she wouldn't—not at her age—but, anyway, she was through with Mr. Wright; let him shift for himself from now on. Nothing could have suited the culprit better. He toyed with his food and entertained himself with his own thoughts, ignoring and ignored by the large Mrs. Twembly on his right. Korea—Korea after fourteen years! It would be like Old Home Week.

Every successful man can look back to a moment in time, a place or a situation that acted as a springboard in relation to the rest of his life. Korea had been Wright's springboard. At the age of twenty-four—a tender age for a mining engineer—his work on the Falsam lode and its subsequent development had hurled him ten years ahead of his classmates. Such a break can be a fluke. When it is, the foundling child of fortune soon sinks into oblivion, buried beneath the wreck of the things he tried to do and couldn't. But Wright had traveled straight ahead and never looked back. He had become famed as a champion reorganizer, then promptly turned his back on reorganizing, feel-

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ing in his bones that many a genius has been dwarfed by a specialty. His goal thenceforth had been omniscience in the mining field, and he had pretty well attained it. From being the greatest general manager the fabulous Dos Picos had ever known, he had graduated to his own consulting office in New York. His retainers alone assured him an income of over a hundred thousand.

"Are you staying long in New York?"

Mrs. Twembly, his neighbor on the right, had said the words. To whom? To him? He looked at her. Yes; she was waiting for an answer. "I live in New York," he replied.

"Oh," she exclaimed with the peculiar inflection which manages to imply a dozen reflections: Strange that I shouldn't have met you before since I know all New York—all New York that counts, I mean. Who are the Wrights anyway? What Wrights? Harford must be using us again to sell or buy something. Serve him right if I put this oaf in his place, and a long pause will just about do the trick.

At this point something happened that prevented a test of strength between her snobbishness and Wright's monumental placidity. In turning his head to look at Mrs. Twembly, Wright's eyes had chanced to fall on a figure so different from that of every other woman at the table that his attention was immediately arrested. Somewhat to Mrs. Twembly's bewilderment he became affable. He said the sort of thing he knew would please her. Her ruffled feathers gradually snuggled back into place almost against her will and soon, to her surprise, she was talking to him quite decently. After all, she thought, he wasn't altogether impossible. Perhaps she would take him under her wing.

THE girl who had been the cause of Wright's transformation was placed six seats away on his side of the table. He was sure she had not formed part of the gathering in the lounge for cocktails or he would have noticed her, if only because of the discrepancy of her age. She must be a lot younger than the rest, young enough to be a daughter to anybody else in the crowd except himself. Yet not painfully young.

Something about her fascinated him from the start. She was lovely, she had poise, and she was bored—fully as bored as he. She was actually sitting back a bit as if she had left the party without leaving the table and didn't care who knew it.

As the event was to prove, it is regrettable that he could not have gone still further and read her thoughts.

How terrible, she was thinking; how I wish I hadn't come! It doesn't really pay to do the thing you don't want to do. You think you're being agreeable, but you're not. It's really the surest way to be disagreeable since that's the way it makes you feel yourself. I wish I could tell the truth straight out. I wish I could say, "I'm sorry, but I must go. I'm a lot younger than the rest of you and not one of you interests me. The things you say aloud don't interest me and when you look at me I can see you wondering why I haven't married. Nobody knows why; I don't know myself." I dislike the man on Mrs. Burnham's right most of all. He is too big. Thank heaven no one is dancing.

BUT instead of making an effort to penetrate her brain Wright was managing to look at her ringless left hand. Of course that was no sure sign nowadays, but in this case he believed it. Nobody at the Burnham table had danced so far and it had begun to look as though nobody would. Up to the present he had been well satisfied, but now he wished somebody would break the ice. He felt he would be willing to do a couple of duty turns that he might arrive at the girl. Finally he decided to start things himself. He caught his hostess' attention and asked if she cared to dance. Her surprise was genuine. She had cut out dancing some years ago, as had the majority of her elderly guests. Anybody could have seen, she thought, that this was not a dancing dinner. She thanked him and refused.

He turned back to Mrs. Twembly. In preparation he had already asked her the identity of various matrons and she had been taking increasing pleasure in her rôle of mothering hen. Now he felt he could risk the one question he really wanted answered.

"Who's the young person five seats down on your right? She's sitting a bit back."

"That? Why, that's Margaret Schuyler. You've heard of the Schuylers, haven't you? She hardly belongs in this party, does she? I mean she's probably here as a favor to Mrs. Burnham and only because Forbes Delamont called off at the last minute. She's awfully good that way—when one of us is up in the air to fill a gap."

"I would have thought, to look at her," said Wright, "she would be entitled to an invitation on her own merits. Do you think she would dance with me?"

"I doubt it," said Mrs. Twembly, knowing that if Margaret danced with one man she would be called out by the lot, "but you can try. I'll say this for her, it isn't for lack of chances that she's never married. She could have had dozens."

"She's not so terribly old," said Wright, his eyes twinkling. "I imagine she could have a few more, if she wanted them."

"That's the trouble; she doesn't. At least, she acts the part better than any other girl I've ever known. As for how old she is, I'll tell you. She's twenty-seven. I know because—" She came to a stop almost with a squealing of brakes.

"I'll help you out," said Wright. "Because you have a friend whose daughter went to school with her."

Mrs. Twembly gave him a glassy look, neither accepting nor rejecting his aid. She switched the subject: "So you, too, think she's pretty, do you?"

"Pretty is the last word I would use," said Wright thoughtfully. "She has looks and breeding. She's one of those dark creatures who suggest mystery and perhaps depth. She's either handsome or beautiful, but never pretty."

"What's the difference?" asked Mrs. Twembly in genuine bewilderment.

Wright laughed shortly. What was the use? He looked over her head, striving to catch Miss Schuyler's eye, but evidently Miss Schuyler was one whose eye could not easily be caught. He glanced at the plates and saw that a course had just ended. The music was starting. Oblivious of his size he rose and walked toward Miss Schuyler. Immediately the eyes of the room were on him. Fortunately the Burnham dinner was a highly formal affair, for a white tie and a long-tailed coat turned him into a god—one of the ponderous gods. He stopped short of Miss Schuyler's shoulder and waited for her to look up. He had to wait for an appreciable moment.

"Wouldn't you like to dance?"

She did not hesitate. "I'm not dancing, thank you."

HE SHOULD have been warned. He did not speak at once, but neither did he move. "I know," he said presently, "but I wish you would. Please do."

"I'm not dancing," she repeated shortly. She was determined not to start what for her would be a weary round.

Any eye, given time, can harden, but at what appeared to Wright unnecessary rudeness the twinkle went out of his eyes with an abruptness which brought to them a totally new and unexpected expression. He forgot all about how noticeable he was. In his new mood, if he had been caught by a rising

(Continued on page 35)

"I think this will be a safe chair for you, Mr. Wright," Morton said

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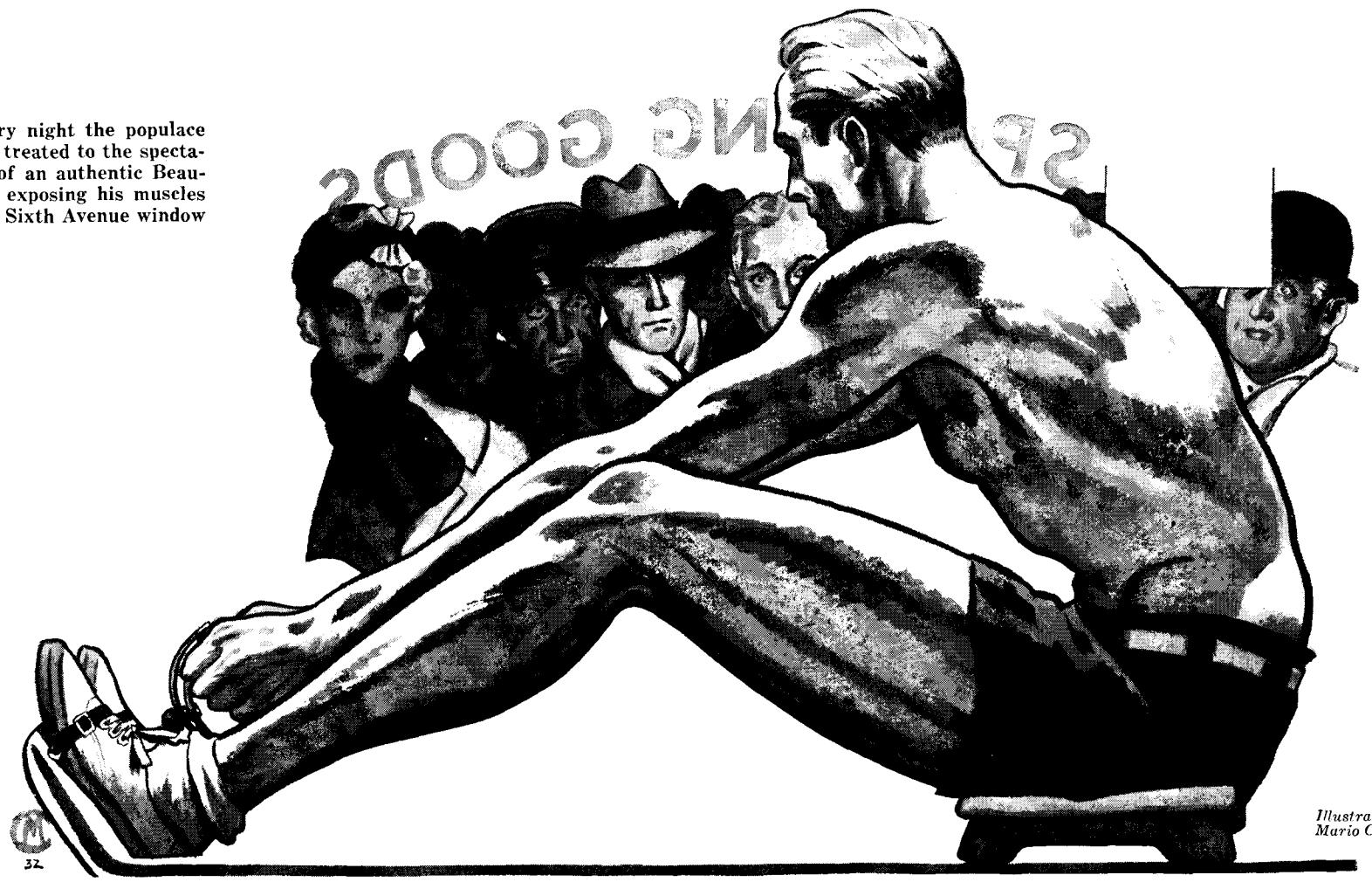

Every night the populace was treated to the spectacle of an authentic Beaufort exposing his muscles in a Sixth Avenue window

Illustrated by Mario Cooper

Strong Man Wanted

A Short Short Story complete on this page

By Richard Connell

YOUNG Mrs. Beaufort cracked down on the head of John the Pig with a hammer. He expired. She scooped up the handful of pennies, nickels and dimes which had reposed in his china stomach. Carefully she counted them. Three dollars and sixty-three cents.

Then the milkman came, and the iceman, and the Beaufort fortune shrank to one dollar and eighty-two cents. Holding back tears, she gathered up the fragments of John. All the other wedding presents had been pawned, and Tom's overcoat, and her ring; for Tom had been out of work for months. Christmas, their first married Christmas, was three weeks away. She wanted very much to cry; but she didn't. Instead, she powdered her pug nose, and began to cook a stew in the bathroom, praying that the aroma would not reach the nostrils of the landlady.

At the moment she popped in the onion, Thomas Beaufort, Jr., was striding up Sixth Avenue through the snowy dusk. A dozen miles he had walked that chill day, and had interviewed sixteen men, some kind, some gruff, none interested in employing, at any price, a recent Princeton crew captain with a modest talent for drawing. Just one job had been offered him and that was back in October. The manager of a Broadway talkie temple, impressed by Tom's six feet two of muscularity, had tendered him the post of doorman, with a uniform of scarlet and gold. Tom had refused, haughtily. It was no job for a Beaufort.

For Tom was one of the original and only genuine Beauforts, that proud and prosperous clan which for a century and a half has dominated directors' meetings and drawing-rooms in Manhattan. He was, indeed, the son of old Tom Beaufort, the banker, a cantankerous, stiff-necked, bellowing bomb of a man, who could smash a bank with a sneeze.

A year before, old Tom had bellowed young Tom out of his big house on the Avenue, and out of his life. Tom's marriage to Sally was not the reason. Sally, if not rich, was at least respectable; the trouble was that young Tom flatly refused to become a banker. He wanted to be an artist. An artist! Old Tom roared out the word in a voice that made the lions in the zoo across the street tremble.

"You're a Beaufort," he thundered at his son. "Born to be a banker. And a banker you'll be, by the lord Harry!"

"I will not," said young Tom, returning glare for glare. He had a full share of the Beaufort pride.

"You're a bumptious, headstrong, footling young fool," stormed his father. "I doubt if you have the stuff in you to make a go of art or anything else."

"I'll try."

"You'll starve. And you need never come to me for help. Once that door shuts on you, it stays shut."

So they parted; and Tom was sorry, for he liked his father. He knew his father would never unbend. Beauforts don't.

IN a tawdry region of cafeterias, near-diamond stores and employment agencies Tom was halted by a queue of shabby men in front of a narrow store. A sign read:

Strong Man Wanted
To demonstrate exercising machine.
Apply I. Wicky

In the window a bored, bulgy young man, clad simply in brief tights, was pulling perfunctorily at an exercising machine. Tom Beaufort started to walk away. Then he thought of Christmas, and of Sally. No present for her. Perhaps no dinner. He stopped. He had a vision of himself, scion of the Beauforts, toiling and sweating away in that window, a public show to be grinned at and gaped at by every passing peasant. He might be seen by friends, by other Beauforts, by his father, even. He shuddered.

Then he thought again of Christmas, and of Sally; and he joined the line of applicants. Out came I. Wicky. He darted a beady eye down the line.

"Here, you!" he grunted and crooked a pudgy thumb at Tom. Tom followed him into the store.

"Strip," said I. Wicky. Tom did so.

"Oke," said I. Wicky. "You work nights. Six to midnight. Fifteen a week. Machine sells for nineteen ninety-eight. You get a buck for every one you sell."

Tom felt lower than the slush beneath his feet as he hurried home; but he greeted Sally with a wide smile of glee when she jumped into his arms.

"Oh, honey, I've got the swellest job."

"Tommy darling! How marvelous! What doing?"

"Salesman," he said. "Big athletic equipment house. Fine firm. Baby, our fortune is made."

So every night the populace was treated to the spectacle of an authentic Beaufort, in trunks, exposing his muscles and his strength in a Sixth Avenue window. When anemic and pimply youths, lured by his biceps, entered the store he pounced on them, swearing that he had been as puny as they till he began to use Wicky's Magic Muscle-Maker; and sometimes he wheedled or bullied them into a sale.

He hated it. He hated with a particular, personal virulence the wretched machine, to him the badge of his shame, the symbol of his degradation. But his thin, secret store of money, hidden in his bureau for Sally's present, grew.

ON Christmas Eve he came home early to get the money—and it was gone. So was Sally. She came in late, a package in her arms.

"Don't look," she said, and thrust the package into a closet.

There was nothing to do but kiss her. So he did. In the morning they had a ten-cent tree, with tinsel. He gave her another china-pig bank, all he could afford. Then she brought out her gift. Tom tore off the paper. He gulped. It was an I. Wicky Magic Muscle-Maker. She was watching his face.

"Oh, Tommy," she cried, "I'm afraid you don't like it."

"Sweetheart," he said, "I love it. It's exactly what I wanted."

Their bell rang. It was an expressman. He handed in a bulky package. They both stared at it.

"It's for you, Tom," Sally said. "But what can it be?"

Tom unveiled it. It was another I. Wicky Magic Muscle-Maker.

"Must be a mistake," said Sally. "No. Look! On the seat. An envelope."

The note in the envelope read:

"Dear Tom: For the love of Heaven, do your exercising at home. I saw you in that window. No place for a Beaufort. You've got the right stuff in you. You've proved it. Come see me. Here is something for you and Sally. Merry Christmas. Thomas Beaufort, Sr."

The something was a thousand-dollar bill.

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The All-America Football Team

By Grantland Rice

THIS has been a season in which alert, powerful defensive play was a leading factor—where the defense in many important games left the attack bottled up, either stopped cold or held to one decisive thrust.

The strong Pittsburgh team was held to a pair of 0-0 contests by Ohio State and Nebraska.

Tennessee's bid for a Southern championship tie with Alabama Polytechnic (Auburn) was shot away by a 0-0 game with Vanderbilt.

Princeton's revived Tigers fought two 0-0 games with Cornell and Navy and then tied Yale at 7-7.

Michigan had to win her Western Conference title with a 3-0 finish over Minnesota, while Purdue's dream of western empire ended with a 7-7 tie against Northwestern.

Southern California and Nebraska had to call on field-goal margins to lead the parades of the Pacific Coast and the Big Six.

It was a year of strong lines, good ends and strong, hard-tackling defensive backs. It was a hard year on the ball carrier, on the brilliant, elusive type of back who once ruled most of the headlines. In game after game he found the highway blocked, the open path well closed.

Those who saw Colgate in action got a clear idea of how eleven men can be blended into a fast, skillful unit. In almost every Colgate contest one saw amazing execution of reverses and double reverses, spinners, laterals and forwards. Deception, speed and skill, perfectly directed by Soleau, gave rival teams and admiring crowds a bewildering picture to look at.

In addition to this there was the terrific speed and power that Notre Dame hurled against the Army.

On the opposite side there was Michigan's type of attack, which depended largely on kicking and passing. But in each instance there was a rugged, smart defense thrown out against all hostile movements. The 1932 season had more than its share of almost impregnable ramparts ready to stand off enemy thrusts. It was the powerful defensive line of Texas Christian University, featuring Boswell and Vaught, that won the Conference crown of the Southwest. Even a back as able as Stafford of Texas could make no headway here.

A Great Year for Pitt

One of the leading features of the season was the killing schedule which Pittsburgh played without dropping to defeat. The Panthers were thrown against West Virginia, Duquesne, Army, Ohio State, Notre Dame, Nebraska, Pennsylvania, Carnegie Tech and Stanford, a campaign that included at least eight hard games. While there were two drawn battles against Ohio State and Nebraska, both fine teams, there had to be brief breathing spells somewhere along this heavily guarded path, thick with trouble from start to finish. Pittsburgh's sudden thrust against Notre Dame, after a stout defense of its own goal nearly all afternoon, was one of the most spectacular accomplishments of the year.

The unofficial recommendations to the Advisory Board, from fans all over the country, were as numerous as ever this year, but they lacked much of the violent conviction of other years, thereby expressing the status of the late season with complete accuracy. For there has rarely before been a season in football in which team play approached such standards of excellence and when so many stars were upon practically even terms.

This situation forced even the most dynamic nominators to withdraw many of their outstanding adjectives, while that fine old line, "You can't possibly leave off So-and-so," virtually disappeared. It has been said that All-America stars were built up through publicity that started early. Yet everybody knows the highly publicized player is the first and main object of the enemy's attack, that he has to face more than his share of the assaulting waves, and if he doesn't hold his place before the barrage the publicity can change quickly from praise to blame.

The publicized player usually has to take more than his share, especially if he is a ball carrier. Nothing pleases a tackler more than to nail a prospective All-America entry and either stand him upside down or make his teeth rattle the "All-America Blues."

It has also been said that outstanding stars have sometimes been overlooked on losing or little-known

The LINE-UP

PAUL MOSS
Left End, Purdue University

"A splendid diagnostician and one of the best forward pass receivers football has ever known."

ERNEST SMITH
Left Tackle, University of Southern California

"A young giant traveling in Number 14 shoes. In addition to his tackle play he is a good place kicker and one of the best punt blockers."

MILTON SUMMERFELT
Left Guard, Army

"His quickness, keenness and power combined to make him one of the outstanding forwards."

LAWRENCE ELY
Center, University of Nebraska

"Ely was one of the main reasons for Nebraska's championship year—keen, alert, powerful, a maker of morale."

WILLIAM CORBUS
Right Guard, Stanford University

"A star guard through 1931, he looked even better this fall. He gave a fine exhibition in every game against heavy opposition."

JOSEPH KURTH
Right Tackle, University of Notre Dame

"A great blocker, fast and aggressive—rarely fooled by the opposing offense—one of the best offensive tackles ever developed at Notre Dame."

DAVE NISBET
Right End, University of Washington

"His coach rates Nisbet not only as the best end he has seen this season, but on a par with the best he ever saw."

HARRY NEWMAN
Quarterback, University of Michigan

"He could hit a pass receiver in the eye at 30 yards—had every trick: change of pace, cut, pivot, straight-arm and elusiveness."

DON ZIMMERMAN
Left Halfback, Tulane University

"Rated as one of the best running backs and possibly the finest passer in Southern Conference history."

JAMES HITCHCOCK
Right Halfback, Alabama Polytechnic Institute (Auburn)

"His all-around ability gave him the place—he was not only the mainspring of a strong team but one of the best performers 1932 could show."

WARREN HELLER
Fullback, University of Pittsburgh

"He had no resting place from late September until November. He was the big factor in Pitt's victories over Army, Notre Dame and Stanford."

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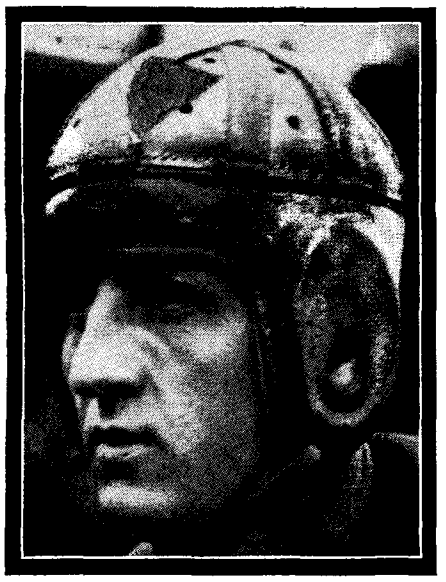
ENDS



Dave Nisbet, right end, University of Washington. Height, 6:1. Weight, 183. Home, Chehalis, Washington

Paul Moss, left end, Purdue University. Height, 6:2. Weight, 185. Home, Terre Haute, Indiana

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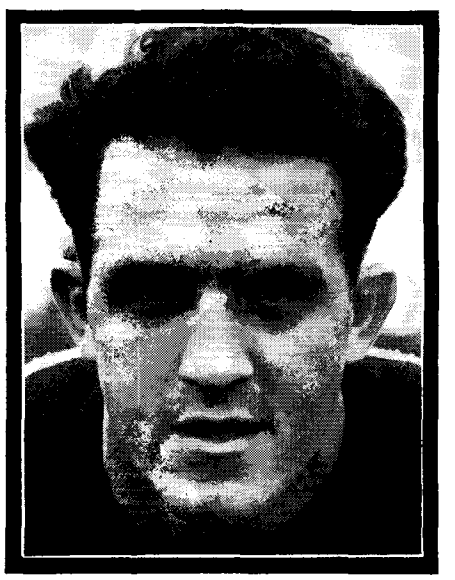

Joseph Kurth, right tackle, University of Notre Dame. Height, 6:2. Weight, 204. Home, Madison, Wisconsin

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teams. This is undoubtedly true. It is one of the tough breaks of existence in other fields than football. Thomas Gray reported this side of life in his famous Elegy:

Full many a gem of purest ray serene
The dark unfathomed caves of ocean bear;
Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
And waste its sweetness on the desert air.

Notre Dame Comes Through

In a season of strong defensive football Notre Dame's tidal-wave attack against a strong Army team stands out. It is seldom that one sees such combined speed and power, such a mixture of blocking and charging and stout-legged ball carrying as Notre Dame offered before 80,000 spectators in this game in which two thirds of the South Bend team seemed to be potential All-America candidates.

Here are the leading selections offered for consideration in the final All-America line-up:

Ends—Nisbet, Washington; Moss, Purdue; Skladany, Pittsburgh; Palmer, Southern California; Hokuf, Nebraska; Meadow, Brown; Robinson, Minnesota; Petoskey, Michigan; Williamson, Michigan; Gillman, Ohio State; Gaddy, San Francisco U.; Geisler, Centenary; King, Army; Anderson, Colgate; Ariail, Auburn; Rayburn, Tennessee; Fairman, Princeton.

Tackles—Ernie Smith, Southern California; Colehower, Pennsylvania; Joseph Kurth, Notre Dame; Boswell, Texas Christian; Brown, Southern California; Jorgenson, St. Mary's; Wells, Minnesota; Krause, Notre Dame; Rosequist, Ohio State; Wistert, Michigan; Hardy, Harvard; Wilbur, Yale; Ransome, California; Morgan, Oregon; Torrence, Louisiana State U.

Guards—Summerfelt, Army; Smith, Colgate; Steponovich, St. Mary's; Corbus, Stanford; Gailus, Ohio State; Harris, Notre Dame; Rosenberg, Southern California; Vaught, Texas Christian; Kabat, Wisconsin; Garrett, Princeton; Billings, Princeton; Huppke, Alabama; Atkeson, Kansas; O'Brien, Washington; Tindall, Syracuse.

Centers—Gracey, Vanderbilt; Ely, Nebraska; Bernard, Michigan; Oehler, Purdue; Wilder, Columbia; Engle, Pennsylvania; Krueger, Marquette; Tormey, Pittsburgh; Christie, California; Neblett, Georgia Tech; Harbold, Navy; Lodrigues, Tulane; Young, Oklahoma; Espey, North Carolina State; Magnussen, Iowa; Sargent, Loyola (Calif.).

Backs—Newman, Michigan; Heller, Pittsburgh; Vidal, Army; Chase, Brown; Montgomery, Columbia; Feathers, Tennessee; Brackett, Tennessee; Hitchcock, Auburn; Zimmerman, Tulane; Ralph Graham, Kansas Aggies; Sauer, Nebraska; Stafford, Texas; Viviano, Cornell; Soleau, Colgate; Griffith, Southern California; Horstmann, Purdue; Berry, Illinois; Manders, Minnesota; Danowski, Fordham; Brovelli, St. Mary's; Melinkovich, Notre Dame; Eliowitz, Michigan State; Dunlap, Oklahoma; Ross Hall, Oklahoma Aggies; Hinchman, Ohio State; Crickard, Harvard; Lassiter, Yale; James, Princeton; Ask, Colgate; Koken, Notre Dame; Rowe, Colgate; Samuel, Colgate; McNamara, N. Y. U.; Sanders, Washington; Roberts, Vanderbilt; Cain, Alabama; Koy, Texas.

Sifting Out the 1932 Stars

After all-season inspection of the records this list was finally condensed into the following leaders through the checking and counter-checking by the entire All-America Advisory Board:

Ends—Nisbet, Washington; Moss, Purdue; Skladany, Pittsburgh; Palmer, Southern California; King, Army.

Tackles—Kurth, Notre Dame; Smith and Brown, Southern California; Boswell, Texas Christian; Torrence, L. S. U.; Colehower, Pennsylvania.

Guards—Summerfelt, Army; Corbus, Stanford; Rosenberg, Southern California; Gailus, Ohio State; Smith, Colgate; Vaught, Texas Christian.

Centers—Ely, Nebraska; Gracey, Vanderbilt.

Backs—Newman, Michigan; Zimmerman, Tulane; Hitchcock, Auburn; Stafford, Texas; Heller, Pittsburgh; Roberts, Vanderbilt; Cain, Alabama; Feathers, Tennessee; Soleau, Colgate.

Then came the problem of cutting down this picked squad to eleven men. In addition to all-round ability the Board had to consider schedule difficulties and hours of service under fire. Here is the argument:

Nisbet and Moss, Ends

Halfway through the season King, the big Army end, seemed almost certain of a place when a broken ankle checked his football career. Down the stretch the contest settled into a warm fight featuring Moss of Purdue, Skladany of Pittsburgh, Nisbet of Washington and Palmer of Southern California.

Paul Moss of Purdue, six feet two in height, weighing 185 pounds, was unquestionably the star end of the year. A fine competitor, he was one of the best forward-pass receivers football has ever known. A splendid diagnostician, he was able to slash, drift, fade or wait in meeting any type of offense thrown against him. He also did Purdue's punting and averaged close to 40 yards all year with control a big factor. His uncanny ability to pull down passes forced Purdue's opponents to keep their secondary defense spread and this necessary caution was a big help to Purdue's strong running game, one of the most successful shown from coast to coast this season.

Dave Nisbet of Washington finally emerged on top after a fine all-season fight with Palmer of Southern California and Skladany of Pittsburgh. Nisbet, six feet one, weighing 183 pounds, was also a remarkable pass receiver, a fast, powerful defensive end and the spark plug of his team. It was his remarkable catch for a touchdown that came near crowding Southern California into a drawn game.

Phelan, his coach, rates Nisbet not only as the best end he has seen this season, but on a par with the best he ever saw.

Skladany gave extremely fine performances against Army, Notre Dame, Nebraska and Stanford to finish high among the end stars of the year.

Kurth and Smith, Tackles

The best tackle east of the Rockies was Joseph Kurth of Notre Dame—six feet two inches in height, weighing 204 pounds. A great blocker, fast and aggressive, he did everything a great tackle should do. Kurth was rarely fooled by the opposing offense and his sure, hard tackling was a feature of every start. He was one of the best offensive tackles ever developed at Notre Dame. Kurth had the necessary speed to get down under punts and he made any return a difficult job. He had the ability to diagnose plays quickly and to get to the right spot in time to break them up.

But the big battle for the other position was one of the warmest of the campaign. Smith and Brown, Southern California's two stars, fought it out. The vote here from coaches, officials and football writers was extremely close, with Smith finally getting the call. This young giant traveling in Number 14 shoes, six feet two, weighing 215 pounds, carried all this weight with unusual speed. In addition to his tackle play, Smith has been a good place kicker, one of the best punt blockers of the year and one of the fastest men down field in covering kicks. A pair of enormous hands added their share to his usefulness on the field.

Yet even against this competition Brown held his own the greater part of the campaign, to give Southern California two of the best tackles football has known.

Colehower of Pennsylvania was one of the best in the east, a big factor in Penn's victories over Navy, Dartmouth and Cornell.

Krause of Notre Dame rose to his best performance against the Army.

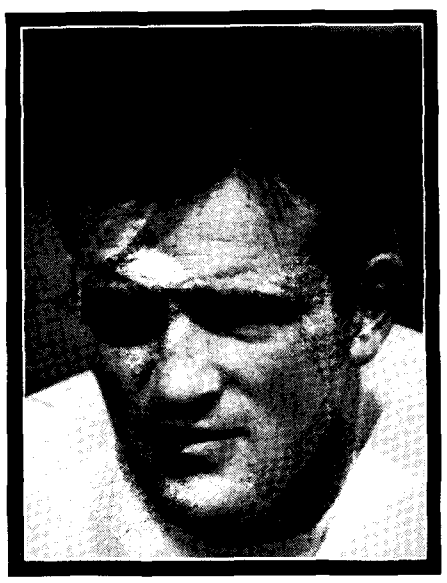
Summerfelt and Corbus, Guards

The work of selecting the two best guards settled down to examining the play of Summerfelt of the Army, Corbus of Stanford, Vaught of Texas Christian, Smith of Colgate and Gailus of Ohio State.

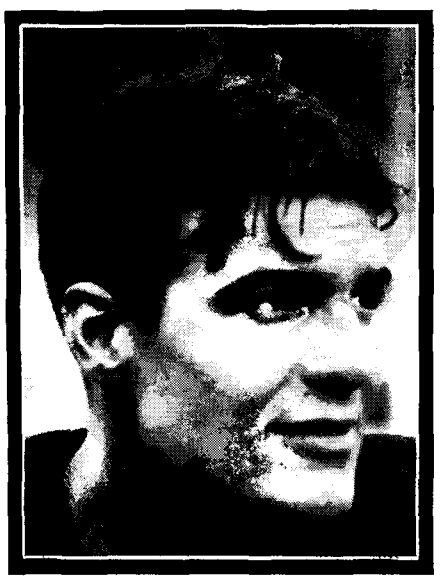
Summerfelt, the Army captain, first caught attention by his remarkable play against Pittsburgh. He was through the Panther line a good part of the afternoon, breaking up play after play with his speed, his tackling and his blocking skill.

He held this pace against Yale and Harvard and even in defeat against

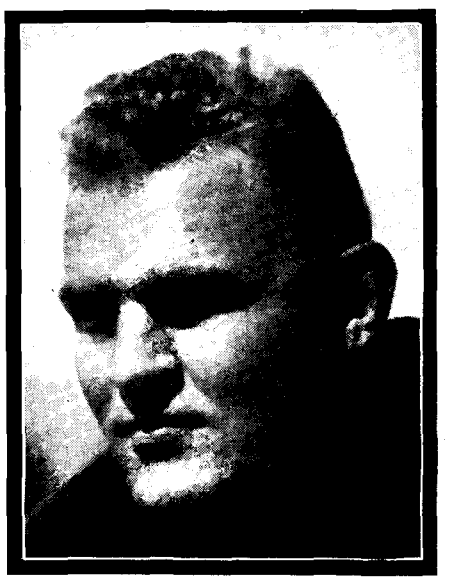
LINEMEN



William Corbus, right guard, Stanford University. Height, 5:11. Weight, 188. Home, Vallejo, California



Lawrence Ely, center, University of Nebraska. Height, 6:1. Weight, 197. Home, Grand Island, Nebraska



Milton Summerfelt, left guard, Army. Height, 6 feet. Weight, 181. Home, Benton Harbor, Michigan

Ernest Smith, left tackle, University of Southern California. Height, 6:2. Weight, 215. Home, Los Angeles, California

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Notre Dame it was Summerfelt who furnished most of the opposition offered the western attack. His quickness, keenness and power combined to make him one of the outstanding forwards of the year. Standing six feet, weighing 181 pounds, he had all the physical qualifications needed for both attack and defense.

In selecting the other guard Corbus of Stanford, Smith of Colgate, Rosenberg of Southern California and Gailus of Ohio State came down the stretch well bunched. Corbus, a star guard through 1931, looked even better this fall. Five feet eleven in height, weighing around 188 pounds, he gave a fine exhibition of line play in every game against heavy opposition. If you check back through the season you will see how little ground was made by any attack through Stanford's line, even by Southern California. He was a big factor in holding Pittsburgh's offensive drives under control. Smith of Colgate, weighing only 175 pounds, lacked just a little on the physical side to be one of the best of many years. Steponovich of St. Mary's was near the front until the closing days.

Lawrence Ely, Center

Passing the midway mark of the season, moving into early November, Ely of Nebraska and Gracey of Vanderbilt were neck and neck. Gracey's play against Tulane, Georgia and Georgia Tech was magnificent. But early in the Tennessee game a severe injury closed out his 1932 career and he was not able to carry on.

Meanwhile, Ely of Nebraska, six feet one, weighing 197 pounds, continued his exceptional play. Jock Sutherland, Pittsburgh's able coach, admitted freely that it was Ely's play that broke up the Panther's attack and rolled back more than one starting thrust. Keen, alert, fast and powerful, a maker of morale, Ely was one of the main reasons for Nebraska's championship year after a long, hard season that knew only a single one-point defeat.

If Gracey of Vanderbilt had not been injured the contest between this pair of centers would have been the closest of the year.

Ely set his pace early, continuing to stand out against Iowa State, Minnesota, Kansas, Kansas Aggies, Iowa, Pittsburgh, Oklahoma and Missouri.

Harry Newman, Quarterback

In modern football the quarterback may be just as much a halfback as any other member of the backfield squad. He might be such a back as Soleau of Colgate, a hard-blocking star who can also direct a team with rare skill and unusual smartness.

Or he might be a Newman of Michigan, who was a large part of the Wolverine's winning attack.

From a fine field Newman stood well above the mass. Five feet, 7½ inches in height, weighing 174 pounds, he made Michigan's run of eight successive victories possible with his forward passing, his broken-field running and his place kicking. He must be listed as one of the most effective triple-threat backs the season produced. He was directly responsible for five of Michigan's six Conference triumphs. He delivered 57 of the 83 points Michigan scored against Big Ten opponents. He scored all of the points Michigan made in her last three big games.

Newman had every trick of the great ball carrier: change of pace, cut, pivot, straight-arm and elusiveness. He had the quickest twist and shift of any Michigan back since Heston. And he could hit a pass receiver in the eye at 30 yards. Newman was also a competitor of the highest type. Even with such stars as Soleau, Montgomery, Griffith and others in the running, the crown-winning Wolverine was a stand-out.

The summing-up would not be complete if no mention were made of the dazzling open-field work by Vidal of the Army up to the Notre Dame game, when his fast feet were held to one 31-yard run. Once in the open, he was the hardest of all to stop.

Zimmerman and Hitchcock, Halfbacks

With Don Zimmerman of Tulane rated in the lead, the closest selection of the entire All-America roster came in the nominations of Hitchcock of Auburn and Stafford of Texas.

Zimmerman was an outstanding star in 1932, even better than he was a year ago. Weighing 191 pounds, five feet eleven inches in height, he rated as one of the best running backs and possibly the finest passer in Southern Conference history. He also did all the kicking for his team with a triple-threat value that few have shown in many seasons. It was Zimmerman who either won or saved game after game for the Green Wave. Zimmerman proved his place as a competitor when he broke his own mark in the Olympic pole vault tests at 13 feet, 10½ inches.

Here is his offensive record:

Texas A. and M.—Scored two touchdowns. Georgia—Scored two touchdowns. Vanderbilt — Scored tying touchdown. South Carolina — Scored one touchdown. Georgia Tech—Scored three touchdowns. Kentucky—Scored winning touchdown.

Beside Zimmerman the South and the Southwest had a brilliant collection of backs in Hitchcock of Auburn, Stafford of Texas, Feathers of Tennessee, Roberts of Vanderbilt and Cain of Alabama. From this list Hitchcock and Stafford ran closer to the crest. Stafford, rated by many as another Pinckert, was a magnificent blocking and defensive back. It was Hitchcock's all-around ability that gave him the place. He was not only the mainspring of Auburn's strong team, but one of the best all-around performers 1932 could show. Hitchcock also belongs to the smart, daring type that knows when to take a chance. Only his versatility, his all-around value both on attack and defense, including every weapon of attack, gave him the place above Stafford, the Texas star. Hitchcock, five feet eleven, weighing 172 pounds, had too many qualities to be left off.

Warren Heller, Fullback

Once again it might be mentioned that modern backs under modern systems may fill almost any post. In selecting the final member of the All-America team the leading nominations were Heller of Pittsburgh, Horstmann of Purdue and Danowski of Fordham.

Heller's play through a heavy, grinding schedule gave him the call. He was the star of Pittsburgh's attack and defense early in the year and he held a remarkable average on through the final game against Stanford. It was Heller's running and passing that beat the Army. It was Heller's swift, sure defensive play that helped turn Notre Dame's attack. Six feet in height, weighing 170 pounds, this Panther star had power to mix with his speed. And it should be remembered that in the hardest schedule of the year he had no resting place from late September until the final November stand. He was the big factor in Pitt's victories over Army, Notre Dame and Stanford, and is rated by Jock Sutherland as one of the best backs he has ever seen in both offensive and defensive fields. It took something out of the ordinary to move through that sweep of trouble, to run that all-season gauntlet from beginning to end.

The All-America Advisory Board

Pacific Coast
R. L. (DINK) TEMPLETON
San Francisco Call-Bulletin

BRAVEN DYER
Los Angeles Times

●

Southwest
GEORGE W. WHITE
Dallas News

●

Missouri Valley
C. E. McBRIDE
Kansas City Star

●

Mid-West Roving Assignment
EDWARD W. COCHRANE
Kansas City Journal-Post

●

Middle West
H. G. SALSINGER
Detroit News

●

South
O. B. KEELER
Atlanta Journal

B A C K S

Harry Newman, quarterback, University of Michigan. Height, 5:7½. Weight, 174. Home, Detroit, Michigan

James Hitchcock, right halfback, Alabama Polytechnic (Auburn). Height, 5:11. Weight, 172. Home, Union Springs, Ala.

Donald Zimmerman, left halfback, Tulane University. Height, 5:11. Weight, 191. Home, Lake Charles, Louisiana

Warren Heller, fullback, University of Pittsburgh. Height, 6 feet. Weight, 170. Home, Steelton, Pennsylvania

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She'd better be Nice

By Henry F. Pringle

Columbia Pictures

White Studio

Lois Moran, whose stage and movie career has been built on wistful demureness, in a scene from Of Thee I Sing

At fourteen she had passed her college entrance examinations. At sixteen she had been starred in the movies. Now she is playing a second season in Of Thee I Sing. And Lois Moran is—just what her movie contract demanded—a bit old-fashioned and very nice indeed

IN 1925 the astute Samuel Goldwyn engaged Lois Moran for the rôle of the daughter in Stella Dallas, a motion picture which shattered all box-office records for lachrymose drama. One of Mr. Goldwyn's particular talents is publicizing the people he brings to Hollywood. When Mlle. Lili Damita, whom he had imported from the music halls of Paris, arrived at the Los Angeles station she found the French consul waiting with a group of compatriots who solemnly waved the tri-color as the train pulled in. She discovered, a little to her surprise, that she was expected to give interviews with an exaggerated French accent; "I like ze nice American mens, non?" was to be the central theme of her remarks.

The result was a pleasant crop of newspaper headlines and, presumably, heightened public interest in the new Goldwyn star. But something quite different had to be arranged in the case of Lois Moran. Her arrival could not be made the occasion for a gesture of good will towards France, Germany, Great Britain or any Scandinavian country for the obvious reason that she hailed from none of them. She was born, prosaically, in Pittsburgh. Lois was entirely unknown. She was actually—not merely through the flattering imagination of press agents—only sixteen years old. It would not have been very effective to have welcomed her with a bevy of schoolgirls and so Mr. Goldwyn abandoned, for the moment, his devotion to official receptions.

He had a better idea. He inserted a clause in Miss Moran's contract which provided that she must remain "unmodern and unsophisticated." He permitted word of this decree to reach the newspapers. The flapper was still flourishing in 1925 and 1926. If Lois rolled her stockings, drank a cocktail or uttered one small, faint "damn" her contract was automatically forfeited. Here, said Mr. Goldwyn, was no dancing daughter. She was billed as a "fragile cameo," a "naïve child wonder," a "wistful unmodernized girl." In brief, she was publicly labeled a nice girl. The movie version of Stella Dallas was, as Mr. Goldwyn anticipated, very successful and Miss Moran shared in the widespread acclaim.

Lois, in addition to being sixteen, was actually a nice girl. At twenty-three, although she has earned vast sums in Hollywood and is now the star in Of Thee I Sing, she is still nice. She is at least as nice as the Mary Turner whom she portrays in the Pulitzer Prize musical play, the girl who becomes First Lady of the Land because of her virtuosity in making corn muffins.

The Invincible Morans

That she can be so nice and avoid being obnoxious for her very perfections may be attributable to a family slogan: "Nothing is impossible to a Moran." Lois Moran is small and just a shade too sweet in appearance. She has light brown hair which curls softly, like the hair of a little girl. Her eyes are blue and she uses, except on the stage, very little make-up. She has a nice tan; she likes to wear sports clothes. She rarely takes a cocktail and she smokes only occasionally. She is unmarried but has scores of admirers.

Lois, whatever her appearance, is one of the most determined and competitive young women on the American stage today. The fact is that her success in Hollywood was financial and not artistic. A long series of mediocre pictures followed Stella Dallas.

"I am stamped as a fluffy ingénue," she once protested and asked for permission to be just a little menacing. The result was an epic called Men in Her Life. But this was not precisely a triumph either.

Since nothing was impossible to a Moran, Lois reversed the usual process and deserted the movies for the stage. She came east in 1930 to appear in one Broadway play. She did not yet disclose, however, a determination to learn to sing. While still in California she had taken lessons and had been told that her voice was not powerful enough for the stage. She kept at it until she arrived in New York about two years ago. Then she called on Frank La Forge, whose pupils had included Lawrence Tibbett, and insisted on singing for him.

She collapsed from sheer nervousness in his studio but Mr. La Forge agreed to take her on. Hardly a year later Lois was summoned for the leading feminine part in Of Thee I Sing.

Her name is not really Moran nor does Lois, save through her mother, actually belong to the Clan Moran. Thus the drive and the determination which have marked her career must be her own. She was born Lois Darlington on March 1, 1909, and her father was the manager of a steel company in Pittsburgh.

Mr. Darlington died when his daughter was an infant and her mother was

(Continued on page 34)

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Illustrated by Carl Mueller

Tim McCarthy

Mr. Summers

Russ Barr

A House for Her

The real estate business is devoid of romance? Meet Russell Barr—and guess again

By Dwight Mitchell Wiley

BACK in the trivial days before he fell in love and made a staggering amount of money—up to, that is, and practically including yesterday—Russ Barr's negotiations with the Grenham Trust had been confined to puerile and infrequent put-and-take arrangements with a paltry teller. Now, seated in the affluent seclusion of the office of the president, waiting for his bank-book with the entry which would verify his changed estate, Russ undertook a little consciously the large cigar which had been tendered him and harkened to the soothing words of Mr. Summers.

"Really, Russell," Mr. Summers said, "you are to be congratulated. Yes. A sale like that in times like these is fine. You have a good beginning toward a fortune, Russell. Take good care of it."

"I'm leaving that for you to do," Russ grinned. "You're sure the safe is pretty steadfast?"

"So far," Mr. Summers smiled.

"Well," Russ said, "keep mine away back in a good dark corner of it anyway. In case."

Pete Summers entered, saying: "Here's your bank-book, lucky."

"One moment," Russ said. "The president and I are still in conference."

"I'll bet you're smoking the wrong end of that cigar," Pete said. "Oh, say, Russ, someone tells me Mrs. What's-her-name, the one you sold the house to, has a very noticeable daughter. How about it?"

"My advice," Russ said, "would be for you to go back to your ledgers and be diligent and better-looking. When you have a good beginning toward a fortune, then it will be time enough for you to think of things like people's daughters."

The light at Carter Street was red, and Russ had time, again, to scrutinize his bank-book. It was real, all right. The entry read "Sept. 19—$4,500," and the total "$4,725." Yes, Uncle George had done the human thing. He'd said, "Well, Russell, if you think you can close them, go ahead and handle them yourself. At forty-five thousand I'll give you ten per cent commission."

The fact was, Russ guessed, that Uncle George had doubted from the first that Mrs. Harley Day was serious about the house on Belden Boulevard. The fact was Russ himself had first regarded her as just another prospect. And he'd got pretty much inured to prospects in the year, since graduation, he had worked for Uncle George. But when Mrs. Harley Day had come to look the second time and brought her daughter Judy, Russ had fastened his dilated eyes securely on this obviously peerless girl and, charged with sudden zingo, had dynamically determined that the Days would move to Grenham or he'd know the reason why.

Russ drove to Belden Boulevard to view again the place where he had got his start.

The house—the Days' house now, the house where Judy Day would start to live next Friday—was a spacious Georgian residence with wide lawns, shielding elms, a tennis court. The sort of house, Russ thought, that would do temporarily for even Judy Day. Would do, that is, for just a year or so until he had a little place in Newport and a penthouse in the clouds and probably a shooting box in Scotland ready for her.

RUSSELL used his key to enter. Standing in the hall he thought, "I'll wait here for her lots of times to watch her come downstairs. The way she sort of just makes a flight of stairs look silly." He wandered through the house and in the living-room he thought, "Right here, before the fireplace, they'll have to have a big conducive davenport for us to finish up the evenings on." And in the library Russ thought, "I'll make a note of this. There will be times when they have parties and we'll want to sneak in here and duck the peasantry." And in the kitchen Russ thought, "Here's where we'll scramble eggs and things when we come home from dances. Nothing so relaxing as a group of scrambled eggs."

Yes, Russ was planning it all right. Oh, even in his present state of dizzy elevation he had sense enough to realize there would be competition. Stood to reason. Where a girl like Judy Day was, there the battle raged and stern men flexed their biceps and contended.

Still, Russ thought, he had the rail so far, at least. He'd had three days with Judy Day. He'd had three days with Judy's mother too, of course, but there had been occasions, interims, in grim discussions about plastering and plumbing, when he'd been enabled to maneuver Judy to himself. On the first of these occasions, when her mother stopped to peer into a pantry, he took Judy out to see the tennis court and, realizing time was fleeting, came directly to the point.

"Miss Day," he'd stated firmly, "Grenham needs you."

"What for?" Judy asked.

"To sort of round things out," Russ said. "See what I mean?"

"Of course not," Judy answered.

"Well, we could point you out," Russ said, "the way we do in suburbs. You know: 'Over there's the Grenham high school—on the corner is the old Gadalia mansion—on our right we have the beautiful Miss Day.' You've got it?"

At this point Mrs. Day rejoined them for a bit of badinage about the taxes, water rates and other unimportant things.

They had another moment on the second day of Mrs. Day's investigations when it seemed to Russ that just a little friendly pressure on her daughter's part would close the deal.

"You really like the house, don't you?" Russ asked Judy.

"Why, yes," said Judy. "Yes, I think it's lovely."

"And you understand, of course, you get a year's free service," Russell pointed out.

"What kind of service?" Judy asked.

"Oh, swell," Russ said. "We never have complaints about the service."

"But I mean what do you do?"

"It will amaze you," Russ explained. "We do everything. Keep the roof from leaking, paint the dog house, ring the doorbell, sharpen skates. A special service man to while away the afternoons with you and see that you get out nights."

"Oh!" said Judy.

"YES," Russ said, "our whole entire aim is just to be on hand to brighten up our clients' lives. You've no idea."

"You only think I haven't," Judy said. "I suppose you plan to tell me you're this special super-service man?"

"You've guessed it, darn it," Russ said. "And I wanted it to be a big surprise for you."

Yes, things were clicking pretty audibly since Mrs. Harley Day had signed upon the dotted line. Yesterday there'd been a bleak and dismal moment when it looked as if the touchdown might not be allowed. They had been walking round the grounds and Russ had been extolling the advantages of the undeveloped tract of land that lay in back of Belden Boulevard.

"You see," he'd said, "that gives you lots of space."

But Mrs. Day said, "But who owns it? Couldn't someone come and put a factory up or something? Overnight? And shouldn't I find out if it's restricted?"

"That's the beauty of it," Russ explained. "That land is located in Stanford, the adjoining suburb, and it's owned by Tim McCarthy, who is mayor of Stanford and the richest man in this part of the state."

"But what if Mr. McCarthy lost his money and became objectionable?" Mrs. Day insisted. "Could he sell it off for tenements or something rude like that?"

"I guess there's not much danger," Russ said. "He will probably end up by giving it to the city for a park or something."

But anyway Mrs. Day forgot her silly worry over what the boss of Stanford, Tim McCarthy, meant to do about the tract of land, and just an hour afterward they sat in Uncle George's office with the deeds and things. And even then, until the check in full was actually in the yearning grasp of Uncle George, Russ hadn't quite believed it possible. Good heavens! Yesterday he'd been a simple, care-free youth. Today he was a man of means and purpose and his purpose was to add as rapidly as he was able to his means and then to lay the proceeds at the feet of Judy Day.

THAT afternoon Russ decided that he'd take a few days off and visit home, in Philadelphia. He had not conferred his presence on the family since the holidays and, after all, a man was entitled to a little breathing spell between big deals. Besides, Grenham seemed to him a little lusterless and would until the Days moved in. On Friday, from Philadelphia, Russ sent Judy Day a wire welcoming her to Grenham and asking her to save him Saturday evening for the Country Club dinner dance.

Russ drove in to Grenham later than he'd planned on Saturday. Just time to dress and call for Judy to take her to the club. By this time they would have the house arranged and would be all enthusiasm over it and he would ring the bell and say, "The service man is here." Then they'd have a twosome dinner on the terrace at the club where someone with an eye to things had situated sentimental amber floodlights in the big old trees and where you danced to low, familiar lamentations.

There would be, naturally, interruptions he would have to tend to, but he'd be quite simple and straightforward with the boys and look them in the eye and tell them they would have to go away and stay there. Yes, Russ felt pretty up-and-at-'em as he rang the bell on Belden Boulevard.

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Mrs. Day said, "Couldn't someone come and put a factory up or something?"

The door was opened by the Day girl personally and Russ noted that it wasn't opened far enough for him to get inside.

"It's Russell Barr, the service man," he said. And barely snatched his face away intact as Judy slammed the door on it.

"Hey!" Russ said loudly. Then he grinned. Girls would be girls, he estimated. They would have their little joke. But this was just a bit too kittenish for comfort. As he stood there, waiting for the door to open, nothing happened. "Maybe this is some new game," Russ thought, and pushed the bell again. There was an endless, indecisive moment as Russ stood there, while everything continued not to happen and a faint suspicion crossed his mind that somehow things were missing on a lot of cylinders. But that was silly. Nothing could be wrong. Except, perhaps, she'd failed to get his wire.

RUSS pushed the bell again and this time, instantly, the door flew open wide and Judy Day confronted him. The girl was at the moment, it was clear, incapable of speech. Her hands were clenched, she seemed to wrestle with an inward something and, as Russ stood there shocked, she made a choked and gurgling noise incapable of reproduction.

"Wha-wha-what's the matter?" Russell stuttered, and at his words she found her voice.

"Ooh, how I hate you!" Judy hated. "Ooh! Ooh! Ooh!"

And slammed the door again.

No one hearing her could doubt the girl's sincerity. She hated him. Her voice welled up from deep, heartfelt convictions.

He stumbled down the steps.

Some time, a long time later—possibly a minute—Russ was dimly conscious that his arm was in a grasp.

"I said 'Hello,'" a voice said.

"Oh," Russ answered. "Sure. Hello."

He now identified the voice and grasp as that of Mr. Spencer Worthington, who owned the house next to the house of Judy Day, the girl who hated him.

"Hello," Russ said again.

"You look," said Mr. Worthington, with envy, "like you were pretty adequately plastered."

"Sure," said Russ, "of course not."

"I don't blame you," Mr. Worthington resumed. "You have a right to celebrate. You sure did sell the last house anyone will ever sell on Belden Boulevard."

"WHAT'S that?" Russ asked, awake at last.

"Or give away," said Spencer bitterly. "So long."

"What's that?" Russ asked again.

"You mean," said Spencer Worthington, "that you don't know?"

"I don't know anything," Russ said.

Mr. Worthington did not debate the point. He had a grievance and he wished to air it. He'd been airing it all day, with fellow grievers and, replete with conversation still, he now proceeded fluently.

"I paid," said Spencer, "forty thousand dollars for my house. Last year I could have sold it easily for sixty. Sixty thousand dollars! Gods! You mean you haven't heard?"

"Go on," Russ urged. "Go on. What's happened?"

"Sixty thousand dollars," Spencer said again and laughed a hollow laugh, "and now I couldn't give the place away."

"Why not?"

"Because," said Spencer, "who in heck would take it?"

"See here," Russ said, "just what in Pete's name is this, anyway?"

"You surely must be popular with Mrs. Day," said Spencer, "Lord, I just thought of that. Ye gods! Selling her a house on Belden Boulevard! A house she can't live in and can't give away. Forty-five thousand, wasn't it? Eeyow!"

"Now, look," said Russ patiently. "I've been away. I've just got back. I haven't got the least idea what you mean."

"I simply mean," said Spencer Worthington, "the garbage plant. Yes, just the garbage plant, that's all. Except, of course, the city dump and dog pound."

"Where?"

"Where? Why, only right in our back yards," said Spencer.

Then, of course, it all came out.

THE whole disaster, Mr. Worthington averred, was due entirely to the fact that all the members of the membership committee of the Grenham Country Club were just a bunch of expurgated something-something morons. Why, anyone with even a deleted something glimmer of intelligence would have known what would happen when they turned down Tim McCarthy's application. But not the members of the membership committee. No. They turned their noses up and turned the Tim McCarthys down.

"But still I don't see—" Russ began.

Well, any normal child of three could, Mr. Worthington averred. Ye gods! Could you make a monkey of a man like Tim McCarthy and expect to get away with it? Especially when he'd probably been goaded on by Mrs. Tim McCarthy, who had social aspirations. Wasn't Tim McCarthy boss, in letters three feet high, of Stanford? Well, then! All that Tim McCarthy had to do, for sweet revenge, was simply call a meeting of the Stanford council and donate his land and vote to use it for their new disposal plant and city dump and dog pound. Right in back of Belden Boulevard where all the most exclusive Grenhamites resided.

"But, good Lord!" Russ said, "what can we do?"

"Just hold our noses," Spencer sighed.

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Well, Russ thought, parting from the bitter Mr. Worthington, anyway he knew why Judy hated him! The Days' exchequer, Russ was sure from things that Mrs. Day had said, did not quite run to buying forty-five-thousand-dollar houses that, the next week, you couldn't live in and you couldn't give away. Yes, Judy hated him, her mother hated him, they hated him unanimously and with fervor and they always would. The fact that Russ had no idea that anything like this could happen made no difference. Mrs. Day herself had brought up the subject of the undeveloped tract of land and Russ had laughed her off.

In the circumstances there was just one thing that Russ could do. A hopeless gesture, sure, as far as Judy Day went. Anyway, he had to do it.

"Listen, Mr. Summers," Russ said when they were seated in the Summers' library, "I just got back today and heard what Tim McCarthy's doing. And you know last week I sold a house on Belden Boulevard to Mrs. Day."

"Yes," Mr. Summers said.

"Well, look here, Mr. Summers," Russ said, "what I want you to do is transfer that forty-five hundred of mine to Mrs. Day's account. I can't keep that commission money."

"You sold the house in good faith," Mr. Summers said.

"I know," Russ said, "but I can't keep that money. And I want the bank to handle this for me. You see the Days don't feel much like seeing me."

"WELL," Mr. Summers said, "I suppose this is very commendable of you, Russell. Yes, we'll notify Mrs. Day of your intention."

"Thanks," Russ said. "Mr. Summers, isn't there anything that can be done about this situation?"

"If there were," the banker answered, "we'd be doing it. We figure that this means a property depreciation, in that section of Grenham, of more than a million dollars. Our bank alone is involved, I might say, to the extent of more than three hundred thousand. On mortgages alone."

"Can't Tim McCarthy be approached?"

"Not Tim," said Mr. Summers, "I know that fighting Irishman of old. The membership committee of the Country Club tried to talk to him later and he threw them out."

"Well," Russ asked, "couldn't he be, well, persuaded?"

"Bribed, you mean? Oh, yes, they thought of that. The people who didn't realize that Tim McCarthy is immensely wealthy. Sure, someone went among the property owners involved and got up a subscription of over two hundred thousand dollars and then came to me about it, wanting the bank to contribute and underwrite a slush fund. Nothing doing—I knew that. No, Russell, we are stuck. Tim McCarthy was informed he wasn't good enough to play the Grenham golf links. They made a laughingstock of him and now he's got revenge and nothing else will satisfy him. Yes, revenge. You see—"

"Wait a minute!" Russ said. "Wait a minute!"

Was that a real idea that suddenly flashed in his mind or was it just a nutty notion? Was there something to it? Wait a minute! Get it straight. Think it out from the beginning. Start with Tim McCarthy. Tim was rich—you couldn't bribe him. Tim was hard—you couldn't plead. And Tim was tough—you surely couldn't threaten him. Tim's pride was hurt; his friends in Stanford probably were snickering. The word had no doubt got around that Tim had tried to go high-hat and join the Grenham Country Club and got turned down. The story probably would do him harm politically. No, there was nothing that would satisfy a man like Tim McCarthy now except revenge. Well, then!

"Listen, Mr. Summers," Russ said suddenly. "I think I've got a thought. It may be nutty but—look here! If I could fix this thing for, say, two hundred thousand dollars—"

"No," said Mr. Summers. "No, you can't bribe Tim McCarthy."

"You don't care how I do it, do you?" Russ said. "Say I fixed it. Permanently. Fixed it so that piece of land could never be used for anything that would hurt property values."

"Can't be done," said Mr. Summers.

"But if it could?"

"We'd put your statue in the public square."

"And something in the nature of a sordid little honorarium?" suggested Russ. "Say — twenty thousand dollars?"

"Twenty-five," said Mr. Summers firmly. "Thirty! I would guarantee it personally. Now let's hear your scheme —if you have really got one."

"Later," Russ said, "if it works."

An hour later Russ was sitting in the office of the mayor of Stanford. There had been, he'd fortunately found, a council meeting and, waylaying Tim McCarthy in the city hall when it was over, Russ had, through sheer urgency, gained his ear.

"WELL, young man," said Tim McCarthy, "you seem to be a bit steamed up. Just what did you want to talk to me about?"

"If you'll let me," Russ said. "It's about that garbage-plant affair."

"So you're from Grenham?" Tim McCarthy asked. "Well, you're due back there now. Right now."

"No—wait a minute," Russ said. "You don't get me. Listen. What you want to do is rub it in on Grenham, isn't it? The snooty gang who run the Country Club and live on Belden Boulevard? Well, then, I've come to show you how to do it—right."

Tim McCarthy had a poker face. It now became expressionless, but he resumed his seat.

"Yes," Russ said, "if you are really looking for revenge I've got a swell idea for you. A hot one. Look here, Mr. McCarthy, what happens, after all, when you've put up your garbage plant on that land?"

"It smells," said Tim McCarthy briefly.

"Sure," said Russ, "but who'll be there to smell it? See what I mean? The people on Belden Boulevard will simply move away. Oh, they'll lose a lot of money, all right. But most of them have got a lot to lose. Yes, they'll simply move away, and then where will you be?"

"Sitting right here," Tim McCarthy said, "and laughing."

"Yes," Russ said, "and getting laughed at, too. I mean in Stanford here. Everybody knows why you donated that land to the town. In Stanford you'll be just the mayor who gave the town a garbage plant. For spite."

"Look here, young fellow!"

"Let me finish," Russ said. "Listen. Giving garbage plants is not such a swell civic gesture, and who'll remember it except to laugh? But listen! Say you made a present to the city of The Tim McCarthy Stanford Country Club!"

"The what?"

"The Tim McCarthy Stanford Golf and Country Club," Russ said. "And made those guys in Grenham pay for it!"

"Well!" Tim McCarthy said.

"Listen," Russ said. "That land of yours is just right for a sporty nine-hole course. You could have it for two hundred thousand dollars, including a clubhouse and a swimming-pool and tennis courts. And all donated by the snooty citizens of Grenham. That's the point! Why, say, the whole darn' state would laugh at them. The papers would be full of it—how Tim McCarthy put it over! Why, all their lives the residents of Belden Boulevard would look across and grit their teeth and watch the citizens of Stanford have a lot of fun at their expense. How's that for real revenge?"

ON TUESDAY evening, with the papers signed and sealed and Belden Boulevard delivered and the whole town pulsing with the news, Russ made his way to Judy Day's. He rang the bell and noted that, almost at once, the door was opened wide enough to let him in.

"It's Russell Barr, the service man," he said.

"Why, Mr. Barr!" said Judy. "Come right in."

Russ noted with approval, as they went into the living-room, that right before the fireplace, as he had hoped, there was a large conducive davenport.

"You see," Russ said, "I've been a little busy these last few days."

"So I've heard," said Judy.

"And the way I figure it," Russ said, "I owe you four days' service. So I've kind of come around to try to make it up."

"I see," said Judy. "Just what kind of service did you have in mind?"

Swell, evidently. No complaints about the service.

For a minute later—or quite possibly it was half an hour—Mrs. Day called, "Judy, dear! Can you come up a minute?"

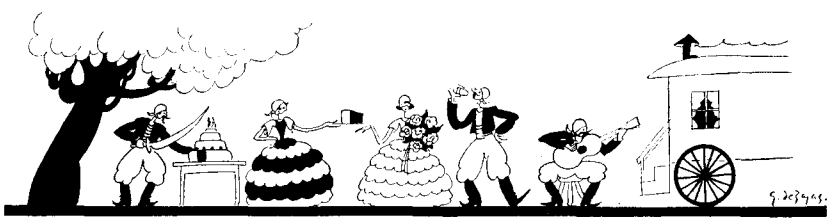
"Well, I'll try," said Judy. "No, I guess I can't."

"Why not?" her mother asked.

"Well, Mother," Judy said, "I just can't seem to get away."

"Can't get away! From what?"

"From Russell Barr, the service man," called Judy frankly. "Sorry, Mother, but he seems to feel I can't be spared."



Keep Up with the World

By Freling Foster

Gypsies, who are scattered throughout the civilized world, have a most romantic marriage custom. The ceremony is not completed until the bride and groom take a bite of the wedding cake, the flour of which is mixed with blood taken from their wrists.

Tropical Africa has a vine that, when growing beside a window, will cling to the glass and eat away the surface.—*By H. E. Uhrig, Marion, Indiana.*

Some persons have an abnormal dread of closed places such as elevators, some are terror-stricken in open spaces such as public squares, and others are frequently seized by a morbid fear that causes a complete inability to walk or even stand.

Using photomicrographs of charred wood and other burned material from suspicious fires, police and insurance detectives now are able to determine which combustible liquid, if any, was used and whether or not the goods destroyed were of the quality claimed for them.—*By J. F. Galbraith, Dolton, Illinois.*

Fish have been taught to respond intelligently to sounds and colors. A Munich professor has trained them to come up and expect good food when he rings a certain bell or places red paper in the aquarium, and swim to the far corners when he uses another bell or blue paper that means bitter food.

During the 14 centuries in which the Bible was copied by hand, so many "improvements" were made by the copyists that at least 150,000 variations can be found today in the existing manuscripts of the New Testament alone.

The best customers of the back-number newspaper companies in New York City today are bootleggers who use these old papers for wrappers to make their purchasers believe that their newly made liquor is several years of age.

The smallest share of stock in history was issued in Nebraska in 1913. A block of fractional shares, upon being turned into full shares, had a part left over for which a certificate had to be issued. It amounted to 1/983,383 of one share and had a par value of 1/33 of one cent.—*By H. L. Alleman, Dubuque, Iowa.*

Of the 5,000,000 slaves throughout the world today, about 2,000,000 are Chinese girls, between four and eighteen years of age, whose impoverished parents have sold them outright for a few dollars into the bondage of large households and farms.

Presidential campaigns are expensive. Not only did the recent one cost about $18,000,000 for party propaganda and the operation of the election machinery but it caused financial losses in various industries. For one example, the broadcast speeches deprived the movie theaters of more than $50,000,000 worth of business.

The Philippines have pythons, not more than twenty feet long and eight inches thick, that are able to kill and swallow a good-sized deer whole, without breaking or mutilating the body in any way.—*By Ed Gallager, Olongapo, Philippine Islands.*

Five dollars will be paid for each interesting or unusual fact accepted for this column. Contributions must be accompanied by satisfactory proof. Address Keep Up with the World, Collier's, 250 Park Avenue, New York City.

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Talbot picked up the pen and wrote "John T. Cutter" in an unfaltering hand

Now I've got you

There may be no such thing as ghosts—but it won't do to underrate the power of the dead

By Lucian Cary

THE shantyboat in the bayou, well out of sight of the barges going down the river and the roving government snag boat, was bigger than most shantyboats. But the real difference was inside.

The stove in the cabin was not the rusted relic of a junk heap but a new kitchen stove. The bunks had springs and mattresses and gray blankets and sheets. The oil lamp on the table was a powerful reading lamp, with a shade. The shotgun on the wall was cleaned and oiled and loaded.

Outside, a November rain came lashing through the blackness of a cold night, borne on furious gusts of wind. Within, the cabin was warm and light and snug.

The two men who sat on either side of the lamp reading newspapers, with a jug of corn whisky between them, were plainly not river loafers. And they were not duck-hunters, relaxing after a cold, wet day on the sandbars. There was no relaxation in them. They were not so much reading the newspapers as combing them, down one column and up the next.

They looked so much alike, as they read, that a casual observer might well have taken them for twin brothers. Indeed, casual observers, not knowing there were two of them, had more than once mistaken one for the other. This error, on which their partnership rested, was an important part of their stock in trade. It enabled either of them to be seen in two places at once.

Talbot threw down his paper. "They haven't got it," he said. "They probably won't have it for a week. We're safe."

Brownie went on reading diligently. There was one striking difference in their appearance. Brownie had a scar across his left cheek, as if someone had slashed him across the face with a keen blade. Talbot had no scar.

Brownie suddenly drew in his breath sharply. Talbot turned his head, instantly alert. He was the harder and stronger of the two.

"Listen to this," Brownie said. He read aloud:

"'SOUTH GRANBY, New York, November 16—The will of Arthur Wakefield Hadley, local philanthropist, leaves a hundred thousand dollars to John Cutter in order, the will says, to right a great wrong. The will does not state what wrong is meant but old residents recall that Cutter was indicted, charged with grand larceny, on the testimony of Hadley, seventeen years ago. The indictment was subsequently quashed. Cutter, who had lived here only a few weeks, left immediately. His present whereabouts are unknown. The will authorizes the executors to spend five thousand dollars to find Cutter.'"

Talbot shrugged his shoulders. "I don't see any way to do anything about that," he said.

Brownie got up and walked to a window and tried to look out. Then he turned and faced Talbot.

"I'm the man they're looking for," he said. "I'm John Cutter."

Talbot lit a cigarette. "Could you prove it?"

"My signature would prove it," Brownie said.

"A man's signature often changes a good deal in seventeen years," Talbot said.

BROWNIE got out paper and pen and began to write. He wrote John T. Cutter a dozen times. He passed the sheet across to Talbot.

"What about the T?" Talbot asked. He noticed that the signatures were free, without any hesitation. Talbot knew a good deal about handwriting. He was a singularly expert penman. He had made his living by his penmanship.

"That's the way I always signed it in those days," Brownie said. "My name is John Trueman Cutter."

Talbot got up and stretched himself on his bunk. From where he lay the light of the oil lamp was full on Brownie's face. His own face was in the shadow.

"Did you have that scar in those days, Brownie?" Talbot asked.

"I got that scar when I was a student at Heidelberg," Brownie said. "In a German student duel." He rubbed the scar reflectively. "It used to be more of a scar then than it is now. It has faded."

"Then," Talbot said, "you'd find plenty of people in South Granby who would remember you."

Brownie poured himself half a tumblerful of whisky from the jug. His hands trembled so, he spilled almost as much as he poured into the glass.

"Not many," he said. "I was being very quiet at the time."

TALBOT lit a cigarette and lay on his back, staring up at the ceiling.

"How did you beat the larceny thing, Brownie?" he asked.

"I put the money back," Brownie said.

He did not explain and Talbot did not press him to explain. He finished his cigarette and put it out carefully.

"Well," he said, "do we start in the morning?"

"No," Brownie said. "Nor any other time."

"What do you mean?"

"I mean I wouldn't go back there for a million dollars," he said.

Talbot's voice was soft—menacingly soft—as he spoke: "Why not, Brownie?"

Brownie shook his head. He drank the whisky he had poured out as if it were so much water and set his glass down. He stood up and, taking the jug in both hands, carefully poured out another half-tumblerful. He sat down again carefully.

"I don't want to talk about it," he said. "I won't go back there."

Talbot sat down at the table and

(Continued on page 37)

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Thunder Mountain

By Zane Grey

The Story Thus Far:

IN A REMOTE valley of the rugged Saw Tooth Range, three brothers—Sam, Jake and Kalispel Emerson—strike gold. Financial backing is needed; Jake starts for Boise to secure it, while Kalispel goes to Salmon, a mining town, for supplies. Sam remains in the valley to guard the strike. Two weeks later—accompanied by Sydney Blair, a charming Easterner with whom he has fallen in love, and her father—he returns. A "rush" is on; Sam has disappeared; one Rand Leavitt has "jumped" the Emerson claim!

Has Leavitt murdered Sam? Kalispel determines to answer the question. Enemies (notably Leavitt and Cliff Borden, proprietor of a dance hall) surround him. He is in constant peril. Worst of all, he *thinks* Sydney Blair has turned against him, become infatuated with Leavitt! . . . "Nugget," a dance-hall girl, goes to work for Cliff Borden. Dick Sloan, one of Kalispel's friends, falls in love with her. Kalispel persuades her to leave the resort and marry Dick. Whereupon Leavitt succeeds in convincing Sydney that Kalispel is having an affair with the girl! . . . The little camp becomes "Thunder City." Kalispel now knows that Leavitt, the judge, is a scoundrel—a bandit, a crook who has sold Sydney's father worthless mining claims, and a murderer. . . .

Jealous of Nugget, Sydney really cares for Kalispel. She subjects him to numberless cruelties, however; is ruthless with him. Then, having learned the truth about Leavitt from Nugget, she comes to him, begs his forgiveness, asks him to marry her. But Kalispel has been hurt beyond endurance—he no longer loves her. . . . While preparing to marry Nugget, Dick Sloan is assassinated by three of Borden's men. Dying, he asks Kalispel to "take care of" Nugget. Kalispel promises to do so, then strides out to "get" Borden. The two men meet, fight it out with guns. Borden is killed. After which Kalispel takes Nugget (whom he now calls Ruth) to his cabin. Gradually he has come to realize that he loves her. He tells her so, asks her to marry him. The girl demurs. Then— "No," she whispers. "I won't." Kalispel is silent for a moment. "Why won't you?" he asks presently. The answer comes as a happy surprise: "*Because I love you!*"

X

"RUTH!" exclaimed Kalispel. "You mean you love me same as you did Dick?"

"No. I didn't love him."

"But, child, how come you to love me? . . . Aw, it's just gratitude, Ruth. An' you're awful upset."

"Don't ask *any* woman, good or bad, how she came to love. It can't be explained. It happens."

"Wal, then, if—if you do—why, that's all the more reason for you to be my wife."

"It is not."

"Ruth, we're off the trail," he said, soberly. "When I thought of marryin' you it wasn't just to get a wife—a woman. I had only a wonderful feelin' for you—the kid who's had such a rotten deal from life. An' I meant to take care of you always as I would of my own sister. But when you say you love me, why that makes me think and remember. I always wanted a real home, a wife to keep me straight, an' kids—"

"Hush!" she sobbed, and put her hand to his lips. "I love you, Kal. . . . I love you as I never loved anyone, even my mother. I will live with you, be faithful till my dying breath, work my fingers to the bone for you, but I will not marry you!"

He took her hand in his and kissed it. For a while neither spoke.

"I'm distressin' you, Ruth," he said, finally. "But, one more word. If you won't marry me you can't be my real wife. Savvy, dear?"

"Yes, I savvy," she whispered, sagging against him.

"An' I'll keep my promise to Dick just the same," he went on, eagerly. "An' I reckon you'll be my salvation, just the same. . . . Forget it now, Ruth. . . . There's so much to think of. To plan for! An' I've much to do before we leave here."

"*Leavitt!*" she cried, lifting eyes he could not gaze into.

"Yes. I meant to kill him. I ought to."

"Kal, it's not for me to—to stop you. Not to save *him*, of all men! . . . Only—today! . . . Can I stand that again?"

"Wal, don't worry; maybe Masters will take care of him."

Jake opened the door a half inch. "Hey, Romeo an' Juliet, will you have supper served in the drawin'-room or out on the balcony?"

DURING the night the long-deferred equinoctial storm broke. Jake got up to reinforce his end of the improvised shelter. "Hey, Kal, is it wet where you are?" he called.

"Ump-umm," replied Kalispel, sleepily.

"Wal, it's wetter'n hell over hyar," growled Jake. "Thet storm finally busted an' I'll bet it'll be a humdinger. Might as wal wake up an' get ready to be washed away."

"What time is it?"

"Wal, it was somewheres near mornin' but I don't know what it is now. . . . Whew! Blazes an' brimstone! Kal, I wish we was safe out of this hole."

"So do I," replied Kalispel, sitting up. A blue-white blaze filled the valley with weird light and a ripping thunderbolt rent the heavens. And before the booming echoes ceased reverberating, another flash of lightning streaked the inky blackness and a mighty sound as of mountains rolling down deafened Kalispel. Soon the intervals between the illuminating flashes appeared to be mere glimmerings and the thunder rolled steadily. Rain fell in torrents.

Kalispel and Jake huddled close to the cabin wall, and by covering themselves and their blankets with a tarpaulin managed to keep dry. Toward dawn the violence of the storm subsided and the rain slackened. Morning broke dreary and gray.

The stream was roaring. Kalispel went over to look at it. Miners all along, as far down as he could see, were trying to rescue racks, flumes, boxes, tools from the yellow flood. It was bank-full and rising rapidly. Many of the claims would be flooded. Even those above high water could not be worked, for all the holes were filled.

Thunder City would continue to roar, but not with labor. The saloons and halls and dens would reap a harvest.

As always, Kalispel swept an appreciative gaze across to the bare slope. This morning it presented a furrowed front. Thin yellow streams were running down its face, flattening out on the level to triangular areas of mud and silt. It presented an ugly sight. Far up, the peak was obscured in gray cloud. Kalispel calculated that it would be snowing up there; and he conceived the idea that it would be well to get ready to leave the valley as soon as the storm was over. He returned to the cabin. Jake was fanning a refractory camp fire which he had started under the shelter.

"I reckon it'd be a good idea to wrangle our burros an' horses," Kalispel remarked thoughtfully to Jake.

With some color in her cheeks this

"Shore would, an' grain 'em good before they drill out."

"All right, let's rustle breakfast," replied Kalispel, brightening with the definite decision. Something dragged darkly at him, holding him back, a cold, grim passion hard to relinquish. "Then you go downtown an' buy a sack of grain, a pair of *alforjas*—I want two new strong ones—an' let's see. I'll figure on it. . . . I'll rustle the stock."

"Kal, hadn't you better stay in camp an' let me do the rustlin'?" queried Jake, gruffly. "You got the girl hyar, an' our cabin is shore strong built. With them two rifles you could keep off—"

"Hell!" ejaculated Kalispel. "I reckon I had. But after yesterday, wouldn't you figure Leavitt to lay low an' let me shake the dust of Thunder City?"

"You mean mud, son," replied Jake. "My idee, Kal, is that when you think, you shore get those deals right. But you had hell yesterday an' you ain't thinkin'. I've a hunch Leavitt had somethin' up his sleeve organizin' them vigilantes."

"Ah-huh. Wal, I'll think," snapped Kalispel, between his teeth. "An' I'm thinkin' I'd better see Masters pronto."

"I'll send him up hyar," replied Jake, hurriedly, with a speculative glance at his brother. "After we eat I'll rustle. An' you get to packin'. This storm will let up today, an' in a couple of days we can be on the move."

JAKE returned to report that Masters had been flooded out, like many others who had tents and shacks close to the treacherous slope of silt. Masters would call on him later in the day. But the busy

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Harold Von Schmidt

morning Ruth made a picture from which Kalispel found it difficult to keep his eyes

hours passed by without the sheriff's putting in an appearance. Jake finally rounded up all the stock, and when they were in the corral Kalispel began to have visions of the long, winding trail down to the Salmon. Suddenly, then, he remembered the ranch he had coveted so dearly; and with a sense of exultation he realized that he had the gold to buy and improve and stock a dozen such ranches. Ruth must be his wife. He resolved not to distress her now, but when they got to Challis he would insist on marriage in name at least. It was the only way he could really protect her and silence gossip for good and all.

It had rained on and off until mid-afternoon, when the clouds broke, showing a bit of blue sky and a gleam of sun. Ruth emerged to stretch her legs, she said, and she wandered around among the huge boulders, going as far as the stream, which was now a torrent. She came back to tell how the miners were moving back off their claims. All at once the sun shone out strong, and as if in happy augury of the future, it appeared to strike a bright glory from Ruth's golden head.

"Oh, there is Miss Blair—watching us!" cried Ruth, suddenly, and then with scarlet face she went indoors.

Kalispel did not look in the direction of the Blair cabin. His great pity went out to Ruth; but still if Sydney was hurt, as it seemed she was, he felt a helpless sorrow.

KALISPEL had hidden his bags of gold dust and nuggets under the flat hearthstone in front of the open fireplace. Beneath this was a hollow boulder, the opening of which he had discovered by accident and which would not be easily detected. For the present he did not want either Jake or Ruth to learn about his treasure.

That night while Ruth slept and Jake worked outside, Kalispel packed the gold in two alforjas and hid them under the pile of firewood in the corner of the cabin.

When at length he went out to go to bed, Jake remarked with great satisfaction, "It's clearin' off cold." The stars were shining white, and a nipping wind blew down from the heights. Before Kalispel went to sleep he had decided that it would be sensible to try to avoid trouble with Leavitt. If anything happened to him Ruth might be left alone. When he analyzed this deduction he found that life had become singularly and incomprehensibly sweet. This, for a cowboy whose heart had been broken, was thought-provoking.

The day dawned frosty and bright. Miners were astir early, and two pack-trains left while Jake was getting breakfast.

"They're beginnin' to drift out," said Jake. "An' I'll have all our pack-saddles an' harness mended today."

"Brother, I reckon you're not in any hurry at all to shake the gold dust of Thunder City," drawled Kalispel.

"Kal, one of my hunches is workin'," nodded Jake, somberly.

"Which one?"

"Wal, two hunches, in fact."

"You an' your hunches!"

"Hell, man! Tell me one thet never worked out."

"Forced to think of them, Jake, I'll be darned if I can remember one that didn't. Oh, yes, you were wrong about old Thunder Mountain."

"How so?"

"Why, you always croaked about old Thunder Mountain slidin' down on us."

"Wal, she ain't yet, thet's true," admitted Jake, morosely.

RUTH came out to interrupt the gloomy conversation. She wore a dark woolen skirt, and with some color in her cheeks this morning she made a picture from which Kalispel found it difficult to keep his eyes. She extended her small hands to the fire. "Gee, it's cold," she said merrily. "I don't see that you gentlemen have proceeded far with breakfast."

"My land, girl, we jest got up," retorted Jake, who had taken a decided liking to Ruth and delighted to serve her. "An' you're springin' somethin' on us this mornin'."

"Ruth, do you like cold weather?" asked Kalispel, thoughtfully.

"Love it. I came from Wisconsin, you know."

"Ump-umm, I didn't know. An' can you ride a horse?" he went on, eying her slim, lithe figure.

"Can I ride a horse! Listen to him, Jake. . . . Can a duck swim?"

"Say, kid, where'd you ever ride?" queried Kalispel, hopefully.

"My dad moved to Wyoming when I was twelve," Ruth answered. "He bought out a rancher near Chadron—"

"Chadron! . . . Why, Ruth, that's near Cheyenne. I rode there myself."

"Must have been before my time," she went on, while Jake drank in her words. "You see, I left there only three years ago. Dad did well for a while—until the rustlers cleaned him out. He never got over that. It killed him. I was left to the tender mercy of a step-mother. And, well—I was sixteen when I came to Cliff Borden's dance hall. . . ."

KALISPEL'S sudden transition from keen delight to bitterness left him speechless.

"Don't look so—so terrible, Kal," she said. "I had to work or starve—and Borden lied to me about the job. But it's all over now. Oh, Kal! . . . I know I've been such a trouble for you all along. Worrying and fighting over me! But just realize, if you can, how blessed good you've been for *me*. . . . And, Kal, when we're away from this mad-hole we'll forget. Then I'll make it up to you."

"Let's get away pronto," replied Kalispel, with one of his flashes of passion. "This afternoon or tomorrow early. Jake, rustle breakfast. Then pack. Put Ruth's bags in the canvas packs. Soon as I eat a bite I'll rustle down to see Masters. He's been pretty decent, or I wouldn't go at all. I want to tip him off. An' I reckon—that'll let me out here."

(Continued on page 32)

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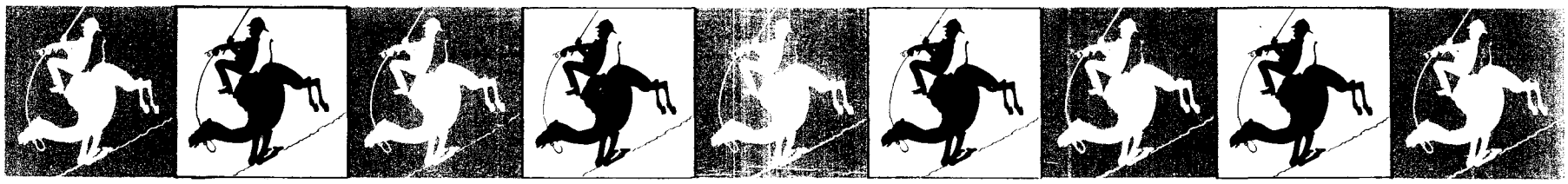


You can't Console a Camel

By Arthur Weigall

Afflicted with such social handicaps as a harelip, a hump and halitosis, the camel leads a life of indignant discontent. You can't win its friendship or mitigate the gentle fervor of its hatred. From long and intimate association with the species, Mr. Weigall, late Inspector-General of Antiquities in Egypt, reveals to you the secrets of a camel's soul

ALL camels are discontented. They hate being camels, but they would hate to be anything else, because in their opinion all other living creatures are beneath contempt, especially human beings. The expression upon their faces when they pass you on the road indicates that they regard you as a bad smell.

They nurse a perpetual grievance against mankind, and ruminate upon their wrongs until they groan aloud; yet when you go to them to find out what is the matter they give no hint of any specific trouble, but merely look at you with sad, reproachful eyes and groan more loudly, or, in certain cases when their sense of unbearable insult is overwhelming, try rather half-heartedly to bite you.

The fact that a camel has yellow teeth, a harelip, a hump and corns, and suffers from halitosis, places the poor creature beyond the range of ordinary sympathy; people, I mean to say, never put their arms around camels, or stroke or kiss them; and yet their sorrowful eyes, fringed with long, languishing lashes, are beautiful, and their whimpering is heartbreaking.

A Dolorous Existence

Camels do not ask for love or pity. They have been domesticated and enslaved for so long that they make no response whatsoever to overtures of that sort, but continue to loathe and despise you no matter how kindly you treat them or how well you feed them. The very sight of you makes them feel sick, and their one request seems always to be that they may be allowed to go away and die.

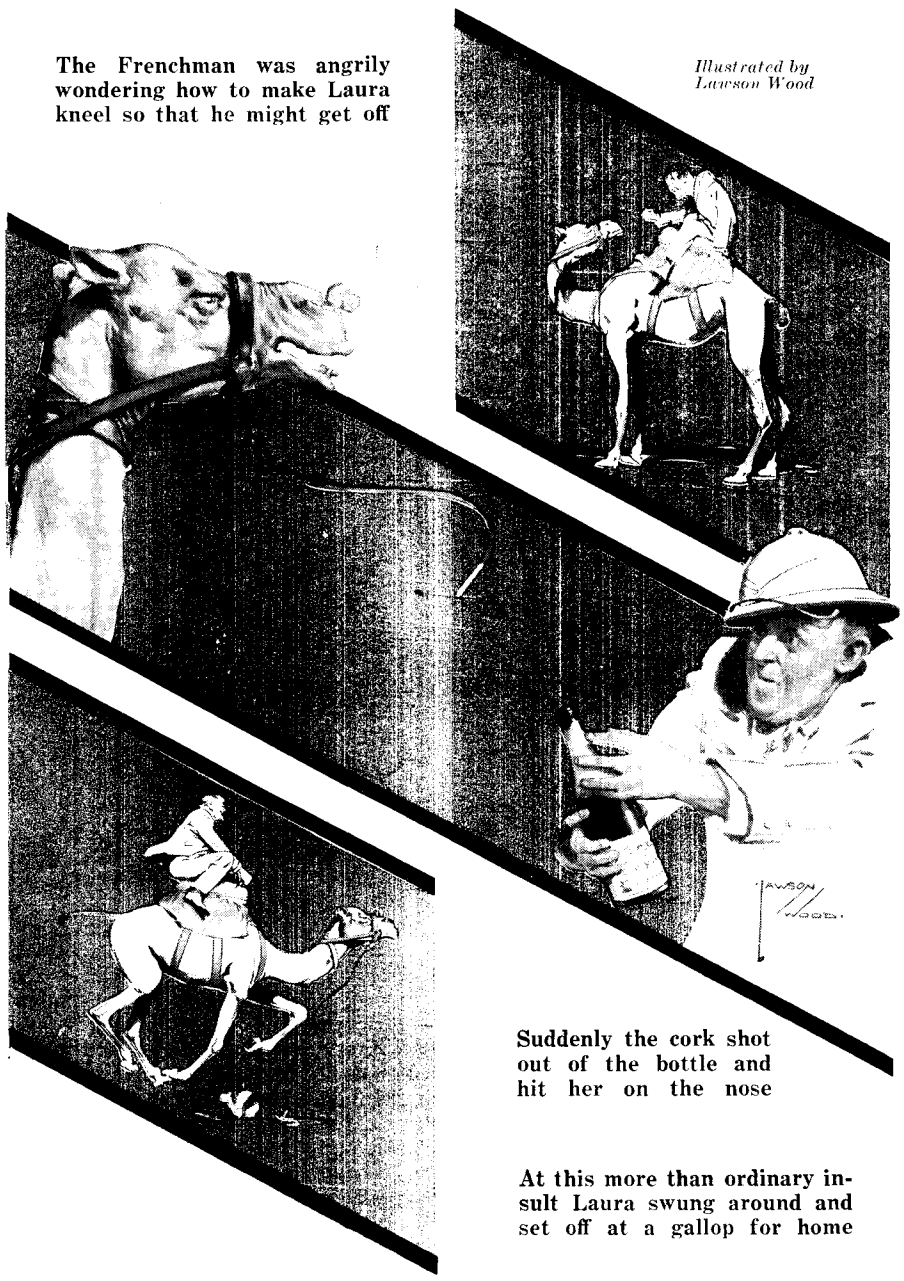
Their days are irksome to them; they have no hope; unlike many animals, they have no rudiments of religion; they make no friends; they just complain and unwillingly submit. When they are being ridden they do not attempt to cooperate with their riders; and when they are being used as beasts of burden they protest indignantly but ineffectually against their loads, and try their best to make you feel a cad.

When I lived in Upper Egypt I had a horse, a donkey, and a camel: the horse for ordinary riding; the donkey—one of those big, white Egyptian donkeys which are almost the size of a mule—for making my daily rounds amongst the temples and excavations which were in my charge, and the camel for desert work. The camel was a swift-footed, soft-going mare who hated me with all the gentle fervor of her gloomy heart, and everlastingly wished she had never been born, sheltered though her life was and easy her work. Her name was Laura, but she neither knew nor cared.

Laura came into my possession under somewhat remarkable circumstances. Her father was a veteran of the war in the Sudan, who carried two bullets in his scarred old body, yet could run sixty or eighty miles a day without distress, and could jump low walls and hurdles like a horse. Her mother belonged to the desert tribe of the Ababdeh, and lived in a tiny oasis near the Red Sea. One early morning in the spring, when the birds were singing and the breeze was rustling the leaves of the palms, the old veteran had found her beside the well, having broken his tether and strayed from the camp of the desert police patrol by whom he was employed.

Eleven months later Laura was born, and when she was but a few weeks old I chanced to be out exploring for deserted settlements and other remains of antiquity in this neighborhood, and made her acquaintance at dead of night. The meeting was due to the fact that she had wandered into my camp and had tripped over my tent rope, thereby causing herself to be mistaken in the darkness for a robber and nearly shot. We caught her after a wild chase which I thought was a man hunt, and next day, being in need of an extra hired camel, I took her mother and her along with me.

Illustrated by Lawson Wood



The Frenchman was angrily wondering how to make Laura kneel so that he might get off

Suddenly the cork shot out of the bottle and hit her on the nose

At this more than ordinary insult Laura swung around and set off at a gallop for home

Too Much for Laura

After that she passed into the hands of a kindly Egyptian farmer, and when she had been weaned after the customary twelve months, and had been employed in light work about the farm for six or seven years, I got her a job in the tourist business.

In this capacity she was assigned the task, one day, of carrying a young French nobleman to a picnic luncheon in the desert some ten miles back from a certain popular resort on the Nile; but she was not feeling as energetic as the other camels in the party and everybody else had arrived at the appointed place before she and her exasperated rider were within half a mile of it. When at last she trotted up, the luncheon was spread upon the rocks, and one of the party was about to open a bottle of champagne.

The Frenchman, hot and tired, threw down his stick and the guiding rope attached to Laura's head harness, and was angrily wondering how to make her kneel so that he might get off the saddle perched on her hump, when suddenly the cork shot out of the champagne bottle with a loud pop and hit her on the nose; and at this more than ordinary insult she swung around and set off at a gallop for home.

The other camels were all tethered some little distance away and, anyhow, nobody thought till too late of giving chase, since they supposed that she would soon be under control. But she did not stop, and the passionate curses of her infuriated and frightened rider merely served to urge her along.

At the pace they were going he did not dare to jump or slide from his lofty

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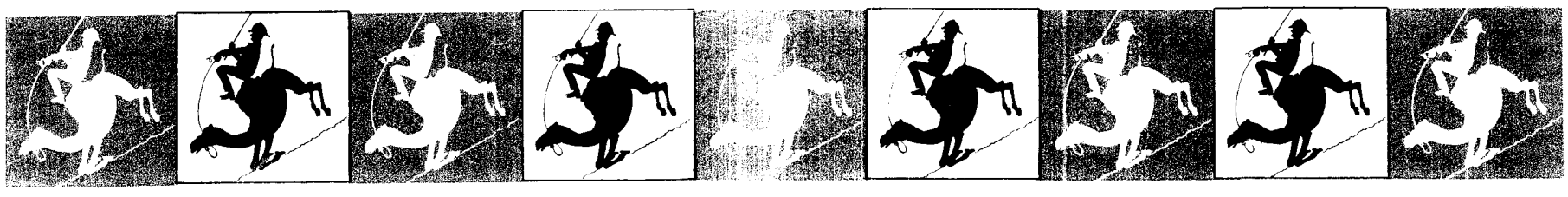

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I'll Bet You Myself

By David Gregg

Advice to bachelors: If you're thinking of picking a wife, don't emulate the hero of this story—unless you're sure of your golf

THE Judge, Doctor Jackson, Mr. William White and Sam Riggs played golf together on a summer afternoon early in August and, having done so, obeyed the summoning wave of Mrs. Riggs, called Polly, who was on the piazza of the very modest little clubhouse having tea with Miss Mary West.

The Judge, the Doctor and Mr. Riggs were doddering old wrecks, but Mr. William White was a genial soul with a lot of muscle, a winning smile and brains enough for anybody thirty years old.

Mrs. Riggs made the only introduction necessary, Mr. White to Miss West, and as she did so William looked once, just once, at Miss West and the expression that went with that look suggested that Miss West had made a strong and favorable impression upon him. He was not the first man to be so impressed.

There seemed to be some reluctance among the men to bother about tea. The Judge, undisturbed by the conventional conversation of such occasions, pored over a score card, making marks on it with a stubby pencil, and arrived at the fact that he owed William two dollars and that the Doctor owed Sam Riggs one. The money was promptly paid and the Judge slipped the score card under an ash tray and left it there.

The conventional conversation continued. The only thing said of the slightest importance was a seemingly innocent remark by the Judge to the effect that Mr. William White's golf had been extremely fine that afternoon. Having so stated he took his departure with the Doctor.

This gave Mrs. Riggs the opportunity to explain to William that it would be perfectly sweet of him if he'd dine with the Riggs family and Miss West, and play a rubber or two of contract afterward. William was delighted to be perfectly sweet. And so they departed on their various ways.

But before they went one of them, and it wasn't Polly, slipped the Judge's score card from under the ash tray and examined it. Mr. White, she observed, had made a 92. After which Miss West smiled, tore the card into bits, dropped them into a convenient receptacle for trash and set about preparing herself for the Riggs family dinner.

SAM RIGGS never seriously claimed that he knew anything about women. Polly said he knew more on that subject that wasn't so than anyone else in the world, and with a smile and a graceful gesture scorned his very true statement that any three-quarters-witted man knows more about women than any woman possibly can. Be all that as it may, he had known Miss Mary West for most of her twenty-six years and had pretty definite ideas regarding her.

Mary West was good to look at, a fine, strong girl with a very feminine figure. She had yellowish hair, greenish-blue eyes and a skin that other women raved over. But it wasn't the blooming beauty of her that made men look twice at her and as much oftener as circumstances permitted. The blooming beauty of her did it the first time, perhaps, but that part of a woman loses importance as acquaintance ripens. Mary had gone to college, and stories were rife that she had been very good at basketball, hockey, tennis and swimming.

But that sort of thing seemed to Sam most unimportant. To his mind a female athlete is nothing to get excited about; there are so many other things that she can do so much better, if she is any good at being a woman. At the little summer resort Mary was a beautiful swimmer and the lady golfer par excellence; in fact, Mary came pretty near to being the best resident golfer, man or woman. She played the middling hard course in the low eighties with considerable regularity. Perhaps Mary herself didn't consider her athletic prowess really important but she got a great, even if a well-concealed, kick out of it.

SAM was sorry that he was not able to write a book on women's minds. He was sure he could, and a darned good one too, but he hadn't time, and besides, he knew mighty well that Polly, for the family's sake, wouldn't let him. But he did know that Mary played at having a mind and no sex, and he'd leave it to any sensible brother if that wasn't a poor state of affairs. Polly, remonstrating with him for having this opinion of Mary, said the usual thing, "The right man hasn't come along, that's all. When he does she'll settle down and be sweet as sweet. She's all right." So much, quite inadequately, for the outer and inner lady.

Mary came to dinner with the Riggs family and in the most subtle way imaginable interested herself in the second generation of Riggses and their mother and ignored William and Sam beautifully. You couldn't put your finger on it but there it was. After dinner she suggested that she and Polly play together and that they would make monkeys out of Mr. White and Mr. Riggs at bridge.

And then, what happened to Mary? William and Sam played circles around her lovely self and left her at the end of the evening hanging on the ropes. Polly smiled and smiled; she was used to it and Sam honestly believed she liked it; she had been taking it on the chin for years and was always ready for more. But Mary didn't smile, not even when William insisted on walking with her to her door, a few hundred yards away.

History does not say who made the first move but, whether it was William or Mary, when William left her it was with an engagement to play golf with her the next morning. If a guess had to be made it would be that Mary at least led the conversation around to golf and that she had hidden away in that beautiful blond head of hers the idea that revenge was sweet.

William drove Mary to the golf club the next morning.

"How about a little stake?" asked Mary as they waited for another pair to drive and get out of range.

"Delighted," said William. "Whatever would please you most."

Unquestionably Mary still had that revenge idea in her head.

"Dollar a hole, five, ten," she said.

"How about a handicap?" asked William.

"You ought to be ashamed of asking a woman for a handicap," said Mary, not perhaps without a note of triumph in her voice. William never batted an eyelash.

"All right," he answered, "no handicap, no piker bets. Let's have something real."

"What's your idea of no piker bets?" Mary demanded.

"You," said William.

"Are you going to be serious tonight?" he asked her

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"I!" said Mary. She hadn't quite expected that.

William smiled.

"Well, not exactly you, but an option on you. You win and I pay you whatever you like. I win and you announce our engagement within a week if I ask you to, and marry me within, say, three months. I'm not sure that I'll ask you to; you've got a lot of obvious faults, but they're too obvious. I think you put 'em on for show. Maybe I'm fooled by your good looks, but I'll know within a week and it would be grand not to have to worry about what you think of me. I'd surely like to win the option."

For just a fractional part of an instant Mary wrestled with the insult or whatever the proposition was. Then, quite naturally, the utter absurdity of the idea struck her. It had possibilities. Imagine the sweetness of saying to William, as he wandered around the rough and in and out of traps, that he must have great confidence in his personality if he ignored it and tried to win a girl with his golf.

"You're on," said Mary, "and we'll make your part of it five dollars a hole."

They drove and played their seconds. Mary was on the green in two, William in the rough with a trap between him and the hole. His niblick brought the ball up cleanly onto the green, across its lovely surface and into the hole. William shrugged.

"It happens that way once in a blue moon," he said.

Mary could not hole her long putt.

THE second hole is some four hundred and thirty yards long, too long for Mary to reach in two, but her third was within ten feet of the hole. William's first drive had been nothing to brag about, though Mary was surprised at the businesslike way he had gone about making it, but his second went flying far down the fairway. He pulled his iron, but was hole high with a mound between him and the hole. With his niblick he played over the mound to the green, across its lovely surface and into the hole.

"That's a dirty trick to play on a lady," William said. "I've never holed two such shots in succession before; as a matter of fact I don't believe I've ever seen it done. Perhaps the gods think you and I were made for each other."

He had made two very good shots, but the holing of them was simply tremendous luck. Mary knew skillful golf when she saw it and Mary thought and thought hard. No ninety-two golfer had any such skill and confidence as William had shown.

She nearly, if not quite, stopped thinking entirely on the next hole. Two wood shots by William almost reached the green five hundred and fifteen yards away; a chip and a short putt gave him a four. There was no luck there, just four fine shots. Ninety-two? At this rate it would be fifty-two, exactly eighteen under par.

ON THE next hole, two hundred yards downhill, William reached the green with an iron, but he took two putts and on the next, a long one, he did the same thing and got a four. The fifty-two was definitely out, but in five holes, playing quite as well as she knew how, Mary was five down.

Four old gentlemen were doing their best to get four balls onto the sixth green which, though it was only some hundred and twenty yards from the tee, was something of a job, for the green was small and completely surrounded by sand and water. They were too busy to see the man and girl sitting on the tee.

William, spinning a ball in his fingers, spoke.

"Do you know why a day is like Gaul?" he asked.

Mary's mind jumped at "gall" for some unknown reason and didn't like the idea the word conveyed, although she wasn't quite sure why. She said, "No, why is it?" as though she didn't care in the least.

"Because it is divided into three parts," William answered. "Those parts, unlike the parts of Gaul, are morning, afternoon and evening. I've been thinking that if by chance I were to win this battle of the century, thereby obtaining an option on you, and you were to take an afternoon train to parts unknown or were otherwise to disappear for the week during which the option runs, I wouldn't have a chance on earth to make the serious, painstaking and systematic study that every wise man should make of a girl before he marries her."

"Don't be utterly absurd," said Mary.

"I HAVE a hunch," William went on, "provided with you a debt of honor is a debt of honor, that it would be awfully nice for you to save for me one third of each day of the week that's ahead of us, that is, a morning, afternoon or evening, so that I may do my studying as it should be done. Of course you can do whatever you like to convince me that it would be best for all concerned for me not to take up the option."

"Go ahead and play. They're off the green."

William played a gentle mashie shot a dozen feet from the pin. "It seems to me only a reasonable request," he said.

Mary played, perhaps a little hastily or with a bit of annoyance, for her ball slid off the green into a trap.

"I'm not going to run away from you," she said. The best William could make of that was that a debt of honor was apparently a debt of honor. He won the hole with a three to Mary's four. They went through the four old gentlemen on the seventh and on it William dropped a stroke to par and Mary got a half. In the next four he dropped two more strokes and Mary got two more halves, but William was eight up with only seven holes left to play, which is the end of a match in any land or clime. William mentioned the fact.

"Your idea of match-making seems to be—"

"Golf match-making or another kind of match-making?" William asked.

"Golf," said Mary and stopped, remembering perhaps that William had not made the match.

"I tried to give you a handicap, but you would have none of it. Generally speaking, men can beat women."

"I saw the score you made yesterday when somebody said you were playing very well."

William turned and looked at the girl intently.

"Why don't you play?" she asked.

"I'm wondering what score you saw," he said. "I never keep a card."

"Somebody did for you yesterday."

Then William understood. "Oh, I see," he said. "Sam Riggs or the Judge always writes down scores—they say it makes it easier to check things up afterward. I give them all a stroke a hole and they add the stroke to my score on every hole again, to make the checking easier." He was smiling. "What did I have yesterday on that basis?"

"Ninety-two."

"And you thought it would be fun to give me a good trimming?"

"It's your honor," Mary said.

They drove, and perhaps because William didn't care and didn't try he got seven pars, as though to do that were the easiest thing imaginable, and in so doing made a seventy, which is very good golf indeed even for that not very long course.

Mary was a wise woman. Fate had played her dirt and she knew it, but she knew that to show pique wouldn't help matters at all. To lose a golf match to a seventy is no disgrace, even if one is twelve down. But for a woman to set a trap and have it catch her own fingers is another matter. Best laugh it off, if it came to the point where anything had to be done about it. But down inside Mary it rankled.

William drove Mary home and on the way cheered her up by suggesting that they agree that the option should run until midnight of the following Wednesday, a week away.

"Make it ten o'clock in the evening. I'm asleep by midnight and don't like being waked up," Mary said in a tone that suggested that she was humoring a spoiled child.

"That's satisfactory," William said. "And may I have my morning, afternoon or evening every day?"

"I expect to be here," Mary answered. "I told you I was not going to run away from you."

"Then may I have that Wednesday evening? And I'd like tomorrow afternoon too if it's a nice day and you'd like to sail down to Jonesboro and help me buy some things I need."

Mary was no quitter. She agreed to both propositions.

"Are you bathing this morning?" he asked.

"I always do."

The bathing beach was very small and very select, only all the people who lived about went there. It was largely a matter of fathers and mothers and their children, who dressed at home and walked there. William turned up that morning and sat down by Polly. Mary came within a minute or two, spoke to everyone and then sat apart with some children, which was more or less a habit of hers. William made no effort to join her.

Of course Sam Riggs didn't know then what had happened that morning. If he had it would not have thrown much light on the subject. As he lay on the sand he thought of Polly's belief that Mary was pure gold and normally feminine, that the right man hadn't come along. On the other hand he thought of a niece of his who was nearly nineteen, the most ravishingly beautiful creature imaginable, bright as a button and perfectly normal except that she had never given boys a thought. It was no pose; it was a perfectly sincere lack of interest, notwithstanding the fact that her sisters found young gentlemen extremely interesting and gave her plenty of opportunity to do likewise. Perhaps some women, including Mary, were like that.

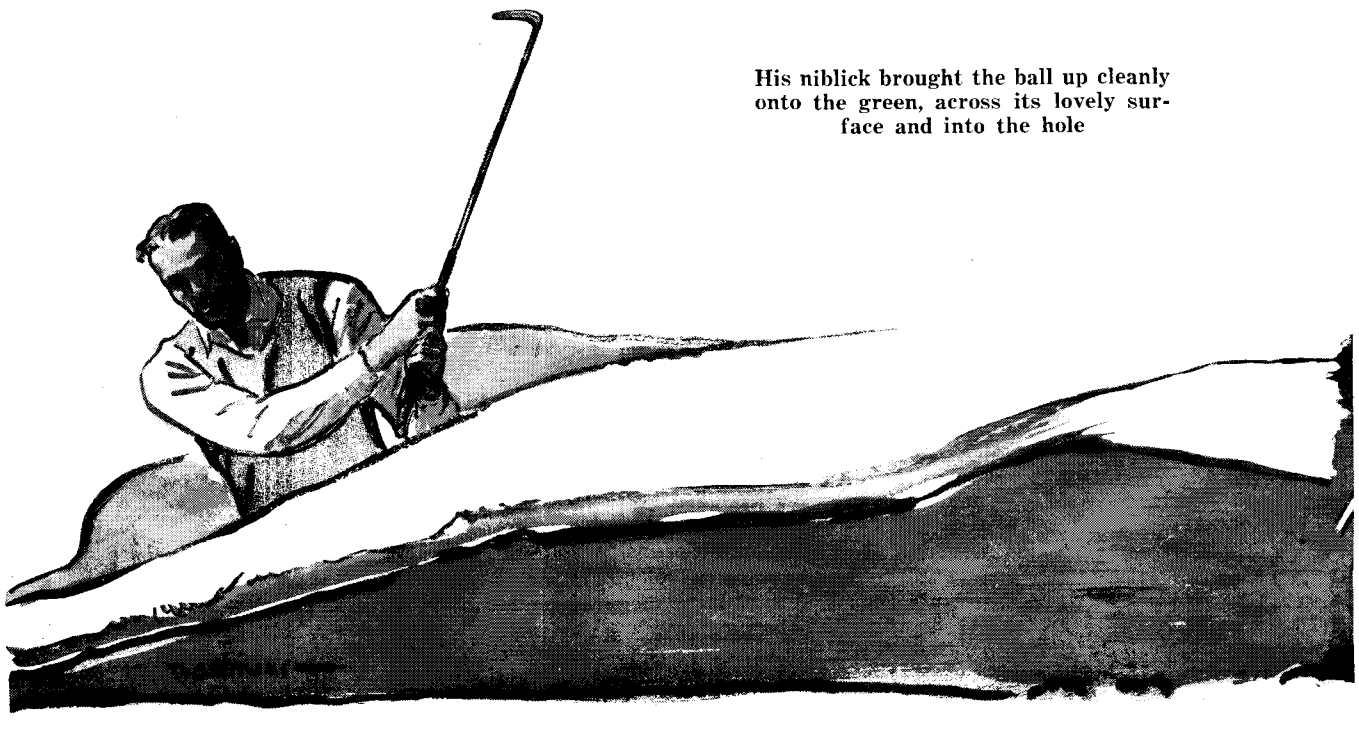
William and Mary apparently paid no attention to each other on the beach that morning; certainly Sam did not see them together. William lunched with the Riggs family and went sailing in the afternoon with them. They played contract that night with the Doctor, and the next morning four of them, all men, played golf.

THAT afternoon William and Mary sailed to Jonesboro and then did some shopping and had tea and started back with a breath of air dead astern. Apparently Miss West had been very pleasant, for William said:

"That option of mine is getting more and more valuable."

"And you are getting sillier and sillier."

"I don't think so. I think that for once in my life I had a brilliant idea when a lucky chance set the stage for it. I'm in a peculiar position. My father died a good many years ago and my mother is a great traveler. So is her sister. The result is they are in Paris or California and way stations a lot of the time and I have to shift for myself. Half a dozen years ago I settled down at a club just outside of Philadelphia, more or less by arrangement with five or six men I'd known. They were all fine fellows and everything was lovely until they began to fall in love. There are only two of us left



His niblick brought the ball up cleanly onto the green, across its lovely surface and into the hole

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now and the other one has been acting queer lately and I suspect the same bug has bitten him.

"Of course there are plenty of men left in the place—there are around fifty of them—but they're almost all cantankerous bachelors with nothing to do but think about what they'll eat or wonder whether they'll play cards or billiards or just sit, and all that futile sort of thing. They haven't a thing to look forward to except getting fussier and fussier and lonelier and lonelier. Marriage and all that goes with it is a complicated business and has a lot of responsibility mixed up with it and a lot of troubles of one sort or another, and it never appealed to me until I began to realize what life without it was likely to be. I had horrible examples all around me and it looked as though marriage was the only escape from a similar fate.

"On the other hand I saw my friends getting themselves married to the girls they had fallen in love with and that seemed perfectly ridiculous. They didn't use their heads, they didn't give one tenth the thought to choosing their wives that they gave to selecting their automobiles. It just happened. You know that's so, don't you?"

"Of course. Go on; it's awfully interesting."

"AND with me there was the question of the family house. It's been rented for five years but the tenants are giving it up this fall. It's a lovely old place and I thought I'd like to live in it but I couldn't do that without a wife. So things more or less combined to make me think of getting married, but having thought it all out I came to the conclusion that it was utterly absurd to wait until I fell in love with some girl; there was no way on earth of telling who the girl would be or what kind of a girl she would be: it would be a pure lottery. Obviously the thing to do was to look round for some girl until I found the right one and put the proposition up to her. If she was sensible she'd look at it just as I did."

"It seems to me a perfect plan," Mary said. "I've always thought that getting married for such a purely ethereal, unscientific reason as being in love is simply courting disaster."

"Exactly. So I started looking round and then I saw you. Of course, in the back of my head I had a pretty clear idea of the type of girl I was looking for and you were exactly the type, physically. Naturally the question of beauty ought not to be important; it's a deceiving and unsubstantial quality and apt to make trouble unless everything else is all right and then, naturally, it's an added blessing. Of course, the minute I saw you I knew that you were beautiful from the top of your yellow head to the tips of your toes, but I wasn't going to let that fool me, nor the fact that your figure and strength and health were all exactly right. Even those won't go far toward making happiness in the long run."

"You're absolutely right," Mary said. "You are really sensible, aren't you?"

"I'm trying to be. Anyway, it took just one evening for me to get over the thrill of just looking at you and get down to the important things: brains, character, likes and dislikes, the question of our having a lot in common to form the basis of sound and lasting family life. You liked golf and contract, they were a good beginning; you liked the same sort of people I did, the Riggs family, for instance. All excellent. The question of your obvious intellectual qualities worried me for a while until I thought of the fact that every family ought to have one brainy member, and why shouldn't it be the woman? No reason at all. As for character, there was so much of the right kind sticking out all over you, especially in your eyes and on your lips, that—oh, well—it was very discouraging when I thought what I had to offer you and it stayed that way until that option fell out of the sky right into my hands."

"Is that all?"

"That's all, except the question of disposition. Somehow I think a kind heart and gentleness and feminine sweetness are important in a wife."

"Then there's no reason for me to worry, is there?"

"I would, if I were you. I'm almost sure that you're the sweetest woman in the world and will always be to the man you marry. I'll know for sure by next Wednesday, even if you do your darnedest to fool me."

AND then Mary laughed, almost without derision, and William grinned.

"Bad-tempered girls don't laugh like that," he said. "Want to play golf tomorrow morning?"

"I like playing with people I like," she said.

"You like Sam Riggs and Polly, don't you? You can ignore me."

Apparently Mary stuck to the plan of laughing it off, for they all played together the next morning. And so it went for a week, and if there was any ignoring being done it wasn't apparent to the bystanders. Two people like William and Mary couldn't ignore each other in that small community. The best they could do was to grin and do a little oral jabbing. William did the grinning and Mary did the jabbing.

It rained on *the* Wednesday and William and Mary played contract all afternoon with Polly and Sam. It cleared late in the afternoon and William stayed to dinner with the Riggses but Mary went home. William drove off after dinner.

Mary had promised him the evening and she was at home. At least she was facing the music. She chose to

(Continued on page 41)

Illustrated by Jay Hyde Barnum

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The Great Abduction

By Arthur Somers Roche

The Story Thus Far:

CARL BRAMER and his henchmen, of New York City's underworld, are planning the kidnapping of no less a personage than Mark Brockridge, the President of the United States, whose ransom, they decide, shall be five million dollars! . . . Ignorant of his true character, Myrna Dale, a society girl, calls on Cattrone, a racketeer, to give him a message from his mother in Italy. Cattrone, to impress her, informs her that he possesses evidence sufficient to convict every prominent racketeer in America.

The girl has just met two extremely interesting men: President Brockridge (who is still in New York) and Ken Meridew, a brilliant metropolitan journalist, who has fallen in love with her. She tells Brockridge of Cattrone's boast; and Brockridge insists on meeting the man. Together they call on Cattrone. Bramer and his gang kidnap the two visitors. . . . Myrna, released, tells her story. Bramer then calmly announces to the secret service that he has *the President; and that, unless five million* dollars is forthcoming, he will not hesitate to kill him. Bramer saunters out, unmolested!

Treherne, head of the secret service, learns that one DiSalvo, a shyster lawyer who is employed by Bramer, has leased Bailey's Camp, on Lake Wamsemuck, Maine, "for a client." With Meridew and Myrna, Treherne flies to a near-by town. Two operatives—Brouillard and Isham—meet the party, which, reinforced by two guides, is presently canoeing toward the camp. As they draw near, a gangster sees them, draws a gun, orders them away. Brouillard shoots him. Others appear. The battle begins! . . . Brockridge is actually in the house. Awakened by the shooting, he rushes to a window, sees at a glance what is happening. The lake is six feet from the house, and twenty feet below it. Mark Brockridge does not hesitate. He smashes the window, climbs up on the ledge *—and jumps!*

Conclusion

BROUILLARD had gone down, but the others did not wait to ascertain the extent of his injury. For the camp had come alive almost simultaneously with the sound of the shot that had slain the fisherman upon the bridge. Treherne had been entirely mistaken in his snap judgment that the gangsters would not be early risers. The chances were that they had never gone to bed. If the rescuers had been under a strain, the kidnappers must have been under one equally great.

Before Treherne had crossed the bridge he heard cries from the camp ahead of him, and before he had progressed five yards across the grass he saw figures on the porch. And a shot whistled by him; he heard other shots; he realized that Brouillard had fallen; he heard the panting breath of Meridew, saw the fleeter-footed Isham dash by him, and then he was upon the porch, engaged in hand-to-hand struggle with men who cursed, who snarled foulness, and who shot and swung their pistol barrels—

There came a breathing space, as there must in any struggle that has not ended quickly. The scene was now the living-room, and behind a barricade of overturned tables and chairs the gangsters crouched. Treherne guessed there were four of them, but there might be more.

He and Isham and Meridew and the two guides had backed into the hallway leading to the dining-room. Isham spoke to his chief. "Been through the bedrooms upstairs," he said. "Not a soul there. Do you suppose they've killed him?"

"God knows," returned Treherne. He called to the gangsters: "Surrender?"

The answer was a stream of epithets.

"You pull off," a voice told Treherne. "We'll kill Brockridge."

"They've got him there," said Meridew.

"Then, if they have, they've killed him already," said Treherne grimly. "Or he'd have called to us—well, my gun's loaded. I'm going after them. We can't find Brockridge; he *must* have been in the building; I'm going."

HE DARTED through the doorway, firing as he came. Bullets greeted him. And then, through a living-room French window came a burly figure, dressed in water-soaked pajamas, and in his two capable hands he wielded the shaft of a broken oar. Two mighty sweeps, from side to side, the oar made. There were groans, shrieks, then a silence above which boomed Brockridge's great voice:

"Come and tie them up, Treherne. This little war is over."

From the rear, whence they expected no attack, and in the person of the man they had imprisoned, came their ultimate defeat. And Meridew, without a word to the President, seeing that the others could cope with the battered vanquished, dashed through the same window that had framed Brockridge's superb entrance, and across the clearing. He winced as he passed Brouillard.

Illustrated by John Gannam

He found Myrna Dale on the bridge, her hands clenched together, her eyes staring at the house which was suddenly silent. She greeted him with a cry of relief.

"Is he—is he safe?" she asked.

"Safe?" Meridew laughed shakily. "He won the fight. Came in like Neptune, only he swung an oar instead of a trident, and when it was touch and go he laid the gang out. It's all over, dear. Come along."

THE "dear" slipped involuntarily out, and he colored in that fashion that annoyed him so greatly.

She left the bridge and joined him. She pointed at Brouillard's prostrate form.

"Is he—is he—" She left the sentence unfinished and averted her head. But as they passed the fallen secret service man, Brouillard sat up suddenly. He looked vaguely about him. Meridew dropped on his knees beside him.

"Thought you were gone sure," he said. "Didn't bother to look you over. The way you sprawled—"

Brouillard passed a hand across his bleeding forehead.

"J-just creased me, I guess. If you could give me an arm?"

Meridew helped him to his feet, and

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Myrna took one arm, and between them they escorted him to the house. There Brockridge himself examined him, and pronounced him in no danger. Then the President held out a hand to Myrna.

"My partner in adventure," he said. He greeted Meridew warmly. "I want to hear the whole story, but—before we do anything else—Johnny Goodhue has boasted that he is a great cook. He has eggs on, and I smell coffee. And even in the informality of a camp, I think that soaked pajamas are a shade too informal. Tell Johnny to hurry that food. I'll be down in two minutes."

He was gone longer than that, and his smooth cheeks and chin made Meridew conscious of his own stubbly jowls. And when he returned Johnny and Fred had placed a savory breakfast on the table.

BROCKRIDGE took his place, with Myrna at his right. Brouillard, his head aching frightfully, was lying down in a bedroom. But Meridew and Treherne and Isham sat down. The two woodsmen stood. The President stared at them.

"What's the idea?" he demanded. "Don't you eat?"

"Had some breakfast early," replied Fred.

"Ain't hungry," said the abashed Johnny.

Brockridge glared at them.

"You're both starved and you know it. A good scrap makes a good man ready for a second breakfast, and it was a corking scrap. Never had so much fun. I'm the President of the United States of America. Do you two boys understand?"

"Yes, sir," said Johnny. Fred nodded an awed assent.

"When I give orders I expect to be obeyed," roared Brockridge. "And I want you two friends of mine to sit down and eat with me."

Johnny glanced at Fred. The President of the United States called them his friends and asked them to sit at table. In agonies of embarrassed delight they both sat down. Brockridge beamed at them. Then, between mouthfuls of food, he told his tale:

"Miss Dale has told you part of it, Treherne. Well, when they put her out of the car, they drove to an estate on Long Island. A plane was waiting, and they piled me into it. No good fighting. We landed yesterday morning, in a field about twenty miles from here. A man named Saunders was the pilot."

Meridew nodded grimly. Among the captives was Saunders and also the man who had impersonated Gerryman. Meridew would always regret that the shot he had aimed at the pseudo Gerryman had missed its mark.

"A good one, too," said Brockridge. "Landed in a tiny field. There was a house there, that looked deserted. Only house for miles, I think. Out of a barn they got a car, and we drove here, and that's all there is to it, except that they assured me that we couldn't be traced, and that if we were, they'd kill me. Cheerful beggars. Wouldn't let me fish, either, but kept me locked in a room. Said they were going to get five million ransom. Treherne, no money was paid, was there?"

Treherne glanced at his watch.

"In about half an hour Bramer will call for the ransom. But he'll get a surprise, Mr. President. If there's a phone here—"

There was, in a corner of the living-room, and Treherne called Meridew's apartment.

"Gerryman? Everything oke. We killed one of them, and the President knocked out the others. For a fact, with an oar. Brouillard slightly hurt, but that's all. Grab Bramer. And the minute you have him, phone me at Wamsemuck 32. Got it? Our plans? Lord knows. I don't know how we're going to keep this out of the papers. How does this sound? Bramer's suspected of traffic in dope. That brings it into my jurisdiction. I discovered that he'd killed a man on Twenty-third Street. I traced part of the gang down here and captured them. One of them was killed resisting arrest. Now, if they don't want to keep their mouths shut, we can't help it. But if they spill any hot air about kidnapping the President, they're insane, that's all there is to it, because he has been confined to the Albemarle with a bad cold. Get it?"

HE LISTENED a moment.

"Get him back? I'll tell you. Have Mannering send his private car to Wamsemuck Junction. If it starts in an hour—wait a minute."

He turned and faced Brockridge, who had interrupted him.

"A private car attracts attention, Treherne," said the President. "And I'd have to wait around here all day. And the sheriff will be here—and an airplane is pretty noticeable."

Isham shook his head.

"I know a swell pilot—kind will keep his mouth shut, too. Brouillard can vouch for him, too. I can phone him at Bangor. We can motor there in about four or five hours. Take off this afternoon and land you in New York long after dark. Have a car waiting for you and slip you right into your hotel."

Brockridge nodded eagerly.

Treherne spoke again to Gerryman.

"He'll be in tonight, by plane. Meet him at Roosevelt Field, and see that no reporters are around. And fix it up so he can enter the servants' entrance and get quietly to his apartment. Understand? But ring me back the minute you've got Bramer. Then round up DiSalvo and any others you can."

He hung up and looked at the President.

"It will be okay, I hope," he said. "Fred, got a car? That's fine. Closed? That's swell. You lend it to the President. Meridew, you and Miss Dale can drive to Bangor and take the plane. No reason anyone should ever know you were along with us. Johnny and Fred—traps tight. Got it? That lets you out, Mr. President. And now, I'm going to steal a gangster razor and get a shave."

"Me, too," said Meridew.

AND with that, the others melting discreetly into the background, Myrna was left alone with Mark Brockridge. He smiled at her whimsically.

"Do you know what I want to do?" he asked.

"I can't imagine," she replied.

"From my window I watched my warders try to fish. Their clumsy efforts annoyed me. It will be half an hour before Fred's car is here and the others are ready to leave. Would you trust yourself in a canoe with me while I cast?"

"Of course I will," she replied.

He led the way down to the float. He glanced up at the window from which he had dived.

"Never so scared in my life as when I hit the water," he told her. "If there were six inches—a dead President. But there must have been six feet, and when I came out, and wrapped my fingers about an oar—I felt fine, I assure you."

He held a canoe while she stepped lightly in. Then, handling his own bulk easily, he sat in the stern and deftly manipulated the paddle.

"Well, we've had excitement, we two," he said.

"I've wanted to die," she said. "To think that I, through my vain foolishness, had put you in a position—"

"I'm some thirty years older than you," he reminded her. "And I didn't think it was so very foolish. And if I did think it might be far-fetched—well, I went ahead with it, didn't I?"

He made no effort to fish. Instead, he ceased paddling and let the lightest of breezes gently waft the craft along.

"You are a most convincing young woman," he said. "At least, you had no difficulty in persuading me. Do you suppose it was only your logic that won me over?"

She felt danger in the atmosphere.

"What else could it have been?" she asked, uncertainly.

HE SMILED. He *was* attractive, this big man with the rough-hewn features, with the somewhat florid manner of a generation gone.

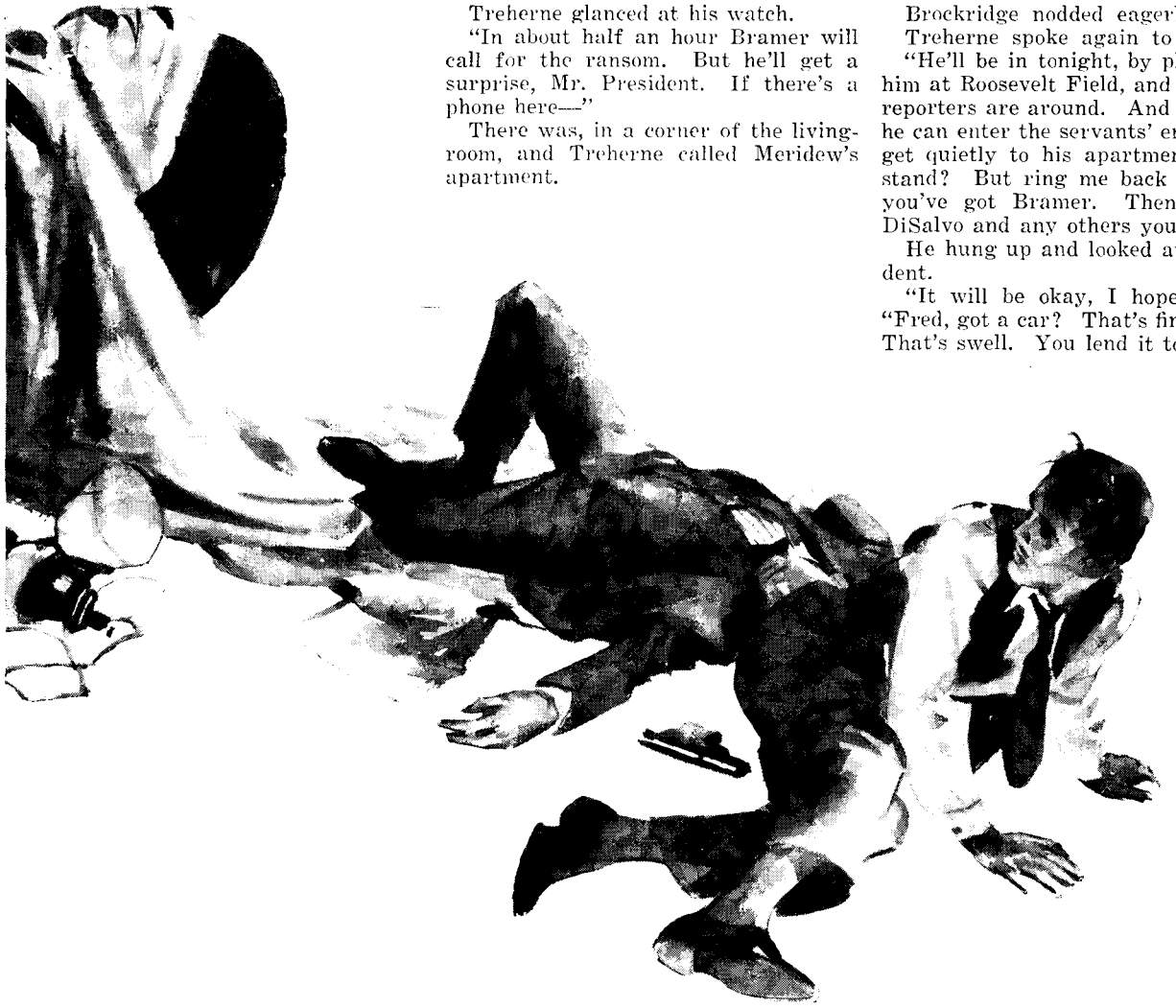
"Ah, that's what we must find out, Miss Dale," he said. "Imagine Mark Brockridge, hard-boiled old Mark, fifty-six years of age—did you know I was that old, Miss Dale?"

"Why—why, no—you don't seem it," she faltered.

"But I am. Fifty-six. And you are—twenty-two, three, four? Don't tell me. It doesn't matter, a few years either way. In the early twenties and I am in the later fifties. Thirty years. In ten years I'll be racing toward seventy, and you'll be barely past thirty. You'll still be several years short of the dangerous age, which I will have definitely passed. Why, my daughter is about your age. And yet, a man sometimes doesn't consider himself old. Oh, he *knows* he is, but he refuses to admit it."

"You shouldn't," she heard herself saying. "You—you dived from that window—you attacked those men—"

"That isn't youth. That's strength, good condition. I am a man past middle age, Miss Dale. Yet even a man past middle age indulges, sometimes, in the dreams of youth. He knows that he's silly so to indulge, but he does. Perhaps it's loneliness, perhaps it's what I called it before—the dangerous age.



There were groans, shrieks and then a silence. "Come and tie them up, Treherne. This little war is over"

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But suddenly he finds himself drawn irresistibly to youth. Now, he has no right to ask anything of youth. Like to like, and that means age to age and youth to youth.

"He argues with himself, unless he's grown stupid as well as old. He tells himself what a mistake it would be. He tells himself that while it may be all right now, for a little while, disparity of years will seem greater with each passing day.

"And then he plumes himself on the things he has to offer. He hasn't youth, but he has, let us say, position, achievement, an assured place. He tells himself that many young women are drawn to older men because of the maturity of their minds, which a young man cannot match. The old man begins to think, not of what he is, but of what he has, what he can offer.

"And then, my dear girl, he is beginning to be lost. Perhaps he realizes this. But he snatches at straws. He says to himself that other older men have married young women and attained great happiness. He says, so great is his conceit, that perhaps the young woman cares for him, that perhaps not to make an offer, ridiculous as the offer seems, may be unfair.

"In fact, my child, with every form of self-delusion, the old man deceives himself. Because hope is born ever and anew in every breast. Miss Dale, you respect my high office, don't you?"

There was a quick and unexpected gayety in his voice.

"Why, of course," she replied.

"MEN have just risked their lives on my behalf," he went on, "not for Mark Brockridge, but for the President. A few years from now, when another has succeeded me, I would cheerfully risk my life to protect that new incumbent of my present office. That is natural, American.

"But it is not merely one's duty to protect the President's person. It is one's duty to protect his reputation. It is one's duty to protect him from ridicule, derision. Isn't it?"

"Why, certainly it is," she told him.

"And it wouldn't matter whence came this derision, or rather, what caused it? If you could stop it, you would, wouldn't you?"

"You know that," she replied.

"Then, my dear young lady, if the President starts making a fool of himself—*over anything*—will you stop him?"

"Why, I don't think I understand," she said faintly.

"Oh, yes, you do," he contradicted. "The young woman to whom I would unburden myself as I have just been doing, would have understanding, else I would never have spoken so frankly. So, then, Miss Dale, am I making a fool of myself?"

"You couldn't do that," she said.

"Oh, yes, I could. Any man could, with you to inspire him to foolishness, Miss Dale. A man, even of my age, could look at you and dream dreams. But age is cautious, is canny, Miss Dale. Whereas youth, having let itself go, cannot recover itself, age is different. Age has the quality of being able to observe itself, to stand back and smile at its own enthusiasms and thus —banish them."

"Would anyone want to banish his own enthusiasms?" she asked.

"Unless those enthusiasms aroused equal emotions in someone else—yes. Do they, Miss Dale?"

She looked at him. He had great charm, more, perhaps, than any other man she had ever met. He was handsome, kindly, brave. He held the most conspicuous position in the world. Until he died he would be a leader of thought and action not merely in America, but in the world. In office, or out of it, he would be the very distinguished Mark Brockridge, to whose words the world would heedfully listen.

He had tremendous power now and would always wield great influence. His wife would meet the great of the world on terms of equality. Life with him would be exciting beyond belief, interesting beyond compare. Had she not met someone else on the very day she met him, she knew what her answer would have been. And, having given it, she would never have wished it might be withdrawn. She knew her own type, the type that, having given loyalty, never modifies it or wants to modify it.

But—she *had* met someone else. And she was not the scalp-hunting kind who wished to dangle a proposal from the President at her girdle.

"I'm afraid," she said gently, "that they don't."

The most fleeting expression of pain appeared in his eyes. Then it vanished. It almost seemed that he was relieved.

"There is, Miss Dale, no fool like an old fool. You have saved me from being that. I thank you."

He paddled her in to the float.

Meridew, clean-shaven and rugged-seeming in the rough costume he wore, watched from the porch as Brockridge assisted the girl from the canoe. He felt a twinge of jealousy. Then he shrugged.

What man could compete against the President? The glamour of that high office would be enough to offset any matters such as disparity of age. For that matter, he conceded generously, Brockridge would not need the advantage of his office in competing for any favors. If ever there was an attractive man, Mark Brockridge was he.

His face was not young-seeming; how could it be? But it wore more the expression of experience, of wisdom, than of age. And fifty-six wasn't exactly senile, at that, Meridew told himself. Even the President's figure, heavy-set though it was, had not lapsed into the stomachy, hippy clumsiness of middle life and beyond. He was solid, but not ungraceful.

They entered the plane without attracting attention

AND, entirely aside from his great abilities and achievements, what a perfectly swell person he was! Any man holding his high office might well have been pardoned if he refrained from active participation in the recent struggle. But Mark Brockridge had not only participated in it—he had won it.

It had been touch and go, Meridew recognized, when Brockridge had made his magnificent entrance. The gangsters were partly protected by furniture. Although the odds were slightly against them, they had the advantage of position, and that advantage might well have turned the tide *in their favor. And then* Brockridge had battered them into swift defeat. Oh, he was a great person!

Myrna Dale might well give her heart to such a man, without thought of his position. And that Brockridge had given her his, Meridew could not doubt. Taking her instantly out in a canoe, as though he couldn't wait to talk with her—the way in which now he assisted her from the canoe—the President loved her.

Well, she was a swell person, too. God love her, the best of luck to her always. Beautiful, and charming, and brave: what more could a woman be?

The telephone rang in the living-room. It gave him excuse to turn into the house, away from the advancing couple. He'd have time in which to compose himself, so that neither Brockridge nor she would know how hard he was hit.

It was Gerryman.

"This is Ken Meridew."

The secret service man laughed harshly.

"You'll be in the papers plenty, Meridew. Bramer came—ten minutes ago. Too quick for us. He knew the game was up. Don't ask me how he knew. Uncanny, that bird. We had the money for him, and we tried to make it seem that we were in a sweat about—you know who. But one of us must have given it away—that we weren't scared any more, and he whipped out a gun,

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Up and Down with Sam Insull

By John T. Flynn

This is the fourth and last article in Mr. Flynn's series describing the growth and decline of Insull's great Power Empire. Its latter developments were founded on the proposition that stocks can go up forever. But it was not the depression that really brought Sam Insull down. It was the poison of easy profits through reckless stock promotion that ruined him and with him the savings of hundreds of thousands of investors

IT IS three years since Sam Insull sat in his box in the golden horseshoe, the center of all eyes, amid the more than imperial splendor of that opening night of the $20,000,000 opera house he had built for Chicago. It is a far cry from this brilliant scene to the dingy police station of Athens where, after flight from America, from Paris, from Milan, he was finally detained by the police. Oddly enough, Insull hated air flight. He would never get into a plane at home. But with doom at his heels he flew from Chicago to his ship. He flew from Milan to Athens.

To an Athens reporter he said: "I learn for the first time I am accused of breaking the law. I have not stolen any sum. The question which arises is one of civil law."

Insull may turn out to be right. He and his brother are now indicted for theft—stealing $514,000 in hard cash to margin Martin Insull's stock brokerage accounts. But this offense had little enough to do with the crash of the Insull companies. This small peculation would not have hurt his vast empire. Insull's real offense was to destroy nearly a billion dollars of investments which represented the savings of some 330,000 stockholders—many of them ruined by the loss.

The point to remember is that most, if not all, of the mortal blows inflicted on his countless companies were delivered by means wholly within the law. Everybody was doing it—or at least almost everybody. His real offense is, in truth, as Insull says, "a question of civil law."

The stealing—I mean the plain, old-fashioned, unvarnished taking of money—did not begin until the great companies tottered to their fall. What wrecked them was not stealing, not raw, crude, obvious grabbing of money out of the cash drawer, but a form of getting hold of other people's money far more delicate and devious—a form overlaid with so many fictions that even the perpetrator can fool his conscience about it.

Insull's great house fell apart because it was built upon sand and because it was full of rotten timbers, corrupt masonry and bungling workmanship.

Just what did happen to Insull's business? All the great plants he built and owned are still in existence, still operating, still making profits. What is it, then, that has failed? Before you can understand the answer to that question you must have a picture in your mind of Insull's vast empire.

Samuel Insull—a caricature by E. J. Post

First let me describe briefly the Middle West Utilities group. Imagine some 5,300 towns in thirty-two states, east of the Rockies. They must have light, gas, water, ice. These things are supplied by 524 electric plants, 80 gas plants, 330 ice plants and numerous water and transportation systems. These numerous plants belong to 235 operating companies—separate corporations. Insull's Middle West Utilities Company was a holding company controlling all these corporations.

But the Middle West did not own them directly. It owned the stock in a group of other and smaller holding companies. It owned, in fact, thirteen such holding companies. These holding companies in turn owned other smaller holding companies, which in turn owned the operating companies.

To make it simpler—the Middle West Utilities Company—a holding company—owned the stock in the National Electric Power Company. This was another holding company. It controlled all the operations of the Middle West in the East—along the Atlantic seaboard. The Middle West owned another holding company—the Central and Southwest Utilities Company. It controlled the properties of the Middle West in Texas, Louisiana, Arkansas, Oklahoma and that region. There were, as we have seen, a number of these subsidiary holding companies.

Now to push the matter a little farther—each of these subsidiary holding companies owned other holding companies. For instance, the National Electric Power, which operated along the Atlantic coast, owned the New England Public Service, a holding company which held all the New England properties. It owned also the Seaboard Public Service Company, which controlled the large group of properties from New Jersey to Florida.

To understand this better let us follow this series of holding companies from the bottom up. The little town of Roxbury in Vermont gets its electric light and gas from the Twin States Gas and Electric Company. The Twin States is owned by the National Light, Heat and Power Company. The stock of this company is owned by the New England Public Service Company. The stock of the latter is owned by the National Electric Power Company and the stock of that is owned by the Middle West.

Thus, starting at Roxbury, Vermont, you must travel through six corporate structures before you come to the ultimate control of that little Roxbury plant—to an old man of seventy-two years, seated behind a broad, cleared desk, in a magnificent office in the Commonwealth Building in Chicago. For Insull held in his hand the reins which guided that vast empire of power.

He had a board of directors. But they were so much furniture. He was a tyrant—a lone eagle. He shared responsibility with no one. His executives were glorified office boys. They spoke with bated breath before him.

After his company went into the hands of a receiver, he sat in conference one day with Edward Hurley and Charles McCulloch, his two co-receivers. There was a difference of opinion. Insull, his old arrogance flaming up, cut off discussion summarily with "We'll do it this way."

"No, by God, you won't," shot back McCulloch, and banged the table. Insull looked at him a little soberly for a moment. Then he said:

"Charlie, if I had had someone to talk to me that way all these years, I would not be in my present plight."

But no one dared to talk thus to the emperor, Sam Insull. He did not even permit jesting. He did no jesting himself. If he made a trip with a group of his executives, he managed the party, bought the tickets, arranged the hotel accommodations, checked and paid the bills. He told his chauffeur how to drive. He trusted no equal partner any-

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where. At the head of his Middle West system he put his brother Martin, who took his orders from Sam only.

What was described above covered the Middle West Utilities Company. But this was only one of Mr. Insull's provinces. There was another—the Midland United. This is another holding company which owns a tangle of corporations—light, trolley, gas companies—in Indiana. It is like the Middle West, only much smaller. Young Insull managed that. It was a kind of training ground for the crown prince, where he could learn how to take the reins when they fell from the hands of the old power monarch.

A King with Many Crowns

There were also, outside the Middle West company, the three great operating companies of Chicago—the Commonwealth Edison Company, which controls the rapid transit system as well as the light and power facilities of Chicago; the Peoples Gas Company; and the Public Service Company of Northern Illinois, which served the state outside Chicago. Samuel Insull was the chairman of the board of all these companies. Samuel Insull, Jr., was vice chairman. Indeed, Sam or his brother Martin or his son held the controlling offices in almost all of their corporations. The gray-haired magnate, at a time in life when most men seek repose, was a member of eighty-five directorates. He was chairman of sixty-five and president of eleven.

But just how did he control all these companies? Did he own the stock or a majority of it? He couldn't have that much money. The answer is that he didn't need to. He controlled these vast possessions with other people's money. He organized two investment trusts in which some 75,000 people had their funds. It is marvelous what you can do with an investment trust if you know how to work it. I ran into a bond salesman who, without a dollar of his own, got his hands on a small investment trust, gathered into it a couple of millions of dollars in almost no time, and within a year controlled six banks in New Jersey.

But Insull got his hands on four hundred million dollars in two investment trusts. He worked out a clever scheme by which with twenty million dollars he could control both trusts. The stock structure was so rigged that one trust controlled the other, but did it with the money of the second trust. It's all too intricate and abstruse to attempt to explain here. The fact remains that by controlling twenty million dollars of stock in one trust, Insull, his son and his brother got hold of both trusts and, through them, of the whole great utility structure valued at two and a half billions which really belonged to some 330,000 stockholders.

All this was done strictly within the law. Some day a more civilized people will not permit such things. Right now the law not only permits them but actually encourages them. For, remember, holding companies are an invention of lawyers. They exist only by special permission of the laws. Behind this maze of corporations and holding companies and investment trusts, Samuel Insull was able to use all kinds of defective and fraudulent materials in his work. But the public knew little of it. His star shone brightly in those November days when his great opera dream flowered on Wacker Drive in Chicago.

Some spots began to appear on Insull's much glorified name. In 1927 the Senate stopped Frank L. Smith, elected senator from Illinois, at its doors and charged him with having been elected by the use of Insull money. When Insull was told of this in his Commonwealth Edison office he laughed at it. Jim Reed, remorseless prosecutor, then senator from Missouri, handled the case against Smith. The latter was chairman of the Illinois Commerce Commission with power of regulation over Sam Insull's Illinois utilities. Campaign contributions from Sam Insull seemed a shocking thing. Insull denied the charges.

Reed summoned Insull. He refused to answer and defied the Senate. Faced with punishment for contempt of the Senate, he decided to yield. But he dodged and fenced with Reed for hours. Reed slowly drew from him that he had given Smith $125,000. Later he admitted it was $197,000. Reed forced him to admit he had also given $33,000 for propaganda against the World Court (which helped Smith). Insull was a loyal Briton, but he hated the League of Nations and the World Court. He hated pacifism. He would bang his fist on his desk when denouncing pacifists. He wanted America to have the biggest navy on earth. Insull believed in the law of force and of might.

In the same campaign, Reed forced Insull to admit reluctantly that he gave $10,000 to the Democratic boss, George Brennan, but he denied vigorously that he gave anything to Roy O. West, who was leading the forces fighting Smith. The truculent Jim Reed suddenly spoke softly to Insull. He asked numerous unimportant questions. Then he purred softly: "When you made this contribution to Roy O. West didn't you know his organization was opposing Smith?"

Too Smart for Sam

"I did not know it," replied Insull innocently.

"Then," said Reed, "you did make the contribution."

Insull's pink face turned a deep crimson. He saw he was trapped. Then he waved his hand toward Reed. "I take my hat off to you."

"How much did you give?" Reed pressed him.

"I'm not going into that. I'm not used to being cross-examined. You're too smart for me."

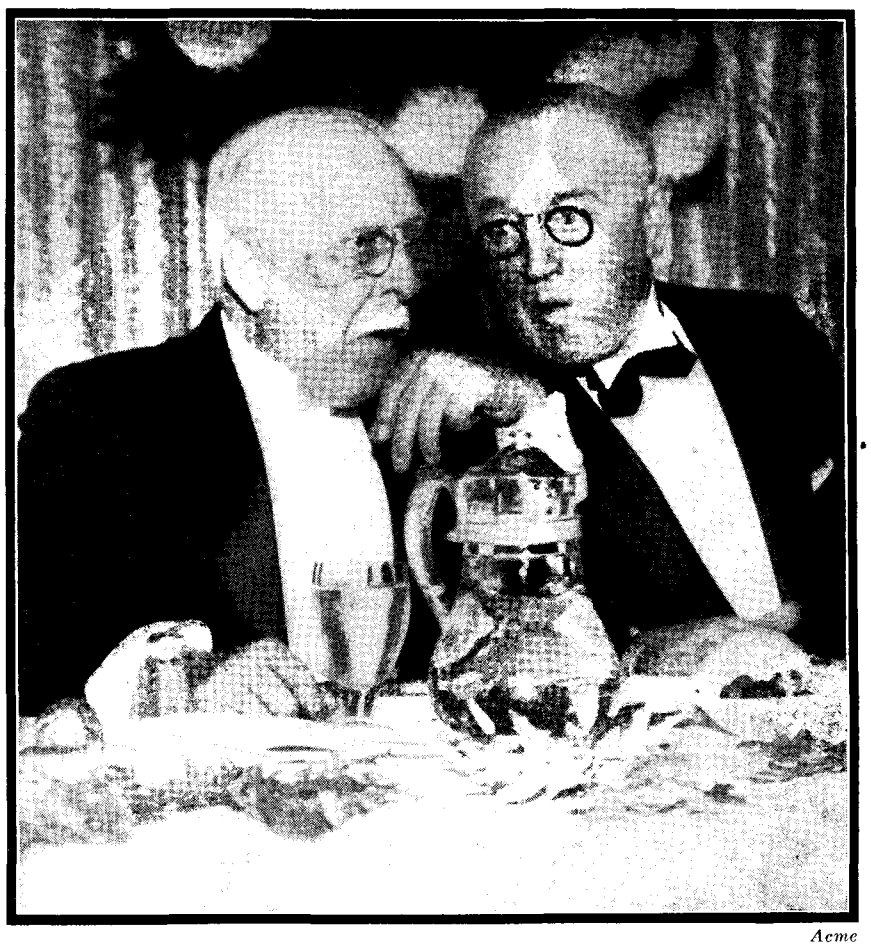
That was an admission for Insull. But the disclosures resulted in Smith's expulsion from the Senate and left a deep stain on Insull's name.

His contribution of so much money to the campaign of an official charged with supervising his own operations was a much denounced offense. Certainly Insull must have had an eye open for his own interests there. But his real reason for that expenditure was vengeance. Insull was an unforgiving man. Smith was opposed by Senator McKinley. McKinley was a rival utility magnate who had built an extensive interurban system covering Illinois. Insull wanted that system. But McKinley sold it to someone else. Insull vowed he would pay that score some day. He gave his money to Smith to defeat his old enemy McKinley.

Insull believed politicians to be so much merchandise to be bought as he needed them. Chicago was not the only place where his hand was felt in politics. No spot was too unimportant for attention. In Jonesboro, Arkansas, a violent assault was made on the small publicly owned electric light plant. The attack was pressed by a mysterious Property Owners' League. It advertised extensively, circulated pamphlets, provoked an election and spent money. Where did the money come from? The town suspected, but never knew positively, until the Federal Trade Commission traced a check for $3,000, payable to the leader of the fight, to Insull's Commonwealth Edison Company office in Chicago.

Insull's arrogance continually got him into trouble. At the International Power Conference in Europe he saw an advance copy of the speech of an American ambassador, former Senator Sackett of Kentucky. Sackett had been a utility manager and he proposed to make a severe criticism of electric light rates. Insull went to him and protested against his delivery of this speech. Sackett replied not only by delivering it but by exposing Insull's interference. After this incident Insull breathed threats of vengeance on Sackett. Insull was always threatening dire consequences to his enemies.

In Maine Insull was slowly taking over the state. His New England power company was acquiring banks, textile mills, paper mills, industries of various kinds. Maine had seen her forests denuded and shipped away. She had a law to protect her from a similar unrestrained exploitation of her water power. Insull began a fight to repeal that law and succeeded, but had to submit to a popular referendum. He had all the newspapers, all the financial interests, all the Republican leaders. One lone editor, Ernest Gruening, with a small evening newspaper in Portland, Maine, fought him. Insull spent $200,000 in that campaign but was defeated. The repercussions of that fight were heard in the Republican defeat in the Maine state election.



Acme

Samuel Insull and Arthur M. Reynolds, Chicago banker

The Public Disapproves

During all this time the Federal Trade Commission was bringing out every week its revelations about the attempts of the utility companies under Mr. Insull's sponsorship to poison the press, schools and pulpit of the country with underground propaganda activities. He had gotten control of and dominated the National Electric Light Association. And there a large section of the more reputable utility leaders resented his methods. They particularly condemned much of the publicity policy which he had followed and which brought the whole industry into disrepute. Some of the most powerful of the Eastern utility men withdrew from the association Moreover, Insull in the East was bidding right and left for utility properties, paying fabulous prices for them—a practice which brought the disapproval of the most conservative managers and bankers. Altogether, by 1929, when the clouds began to gather over him, his reputation was seriously impaired, though he did not seem to realize it.

Insull, like so many great business promoters, had the usual supply of shirt-stuffers to tell the world what an amazing man he was. One of them wrote how he was "just the public's hired man." Another told in a fulsome tale how "there are no mysteries in Insull's great business structure. Any man of ordinary intelligence can find out as much about what goes on in that business as he wishes." Insull himself began a theatrical stunt of making reports to stockholders by means of the radio. Imitating the English custom, he would assemble a thousand stockholders at an annual meeting in a theater and from the stage broadcast an apparently intimate account of his stewardship.

But there were plenty of mysteries that were never revealed. In fact, the fall of Samuel Insull is a mystery story. But it is a mystery story which leads, not through underground passages, deserted castles, haunted houses and gangsters' hideaways, but through ledgers, balance sheets, brokers' offices and bank accounts. It's much simpler to describe a crime story in which the villain sneaks up behind his victim, hits him over the head with a blackjack, and then takes his wallet. It's a little more difficult where the operator uses stock certificates instead of blackjacks and corporation statements instead of poison gas. He doesn't take your money. You hand it to him. It's surprising what cute little tricks you can do with the aid of a good bookkeeper. Now here are the things Insull did which gradually weakened his financial structure and brought it to ruin.

Insull sat at his desk in the Commonwealth Edison Building with a great

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International *Keystone-Underwood* *Wide World*

The Insull power triumvirate: Martin (left), Samuel, Jr., and his father

map of his empire spread out on the wall. There were hundreds of plants and corporations all arranged in holding company groups. The master, like a train dispatcher, could move these properties around, from one group to another, as it suited his purpose. Thus he would have the National Electric Power Company sell three properties to the Middle West at a good profit—$3,000,000 in one case. Of course there was no real profit. The Middle West owned the National. It was like a man selling a piece of property to his wife, at an increased price, and declaring a profit.

Profits Out of Thin Air

Another time the National bought a utility company from Allyn and Emanuel for $2,500,000. It was promptly turned over to the Middle West at $3,500,000—a "profit" of a million. This thing went on all over the system, the scheming magnate in his high tower moving the light and power and gas plants of hundreds of towns around as his needs dictated, and piling up fictitious profits.

Why did he do this? In order to make the public believe that his companies were very prosperous, so that he might induce them to buy more and more millions of his stock. For instance, in 1931 it was announced that the year, so disastrous for business, had been the second most profitable year in the Middle West's history. This profit was put down at $11,000,000. But a large part of these profits were fictitious. Insull created some of them out of the air by merely moving one concern from the Middle West group over to the Public Service of Northern Illinois. He called it a sale, fixed the sale price at $15,000,000, which showed a large profit for Middle West. At the time he did this, when he was showing these so-called record profits, his employees—collectors, mechanics, elevator man, clerks—were being driven at hot speed to sell stocks to their friends and relatives and to buy themselves. And when this campaign was going on—in December, 1931—Insull knew that his great business was bankrupt.

The chief profits of holding companies come from the dividends of the companies they own. Insull was always able to still further pad his profits by having these subsidiary companies declare stock dividends. These stock dividends would be handed over to the Middle West and put down as profits at the market value of the stock. This is a violation of the rules of accounting of the New York Stock Exchange. Everyone knows the market value of a stock does not represent its true value. It may be too high or too low. In 1928 and 1929 the market was outrageously high. The New York Stock Exchange has roundly condemned this practice. But Insull companies were loaded with such fictitious profits. For instance, the Middle West in 1930 showed enormous profits. Thirty per cent of these profits were made up of stock dividends and profits on intercompany sales.

A Surplus That Disappeared

Every man who owns an automobile knows its value decreases each year. That's called depreciation. If you are asked what you are worth, you will have to put that automobile in at its market value less depreciation. If you leave out the depreciation or minimize it you are fooling yourself and your creditors. That's what Insull did. Seven per cent is the well understood fair rate of depreciation in utility accounting. Insull put it at five in the Middle West, thus padding his assets and surplus each year for several millions. In 1931 he announced a profit on his rapid transit company of $207,000. *But he allowed no depreciation.* Had he done so that profit would have been turned into a deficit of over a million dollars. The rapid transit company has since gone into the hands of a receiver.

How far did these things affect the integrity of his companies? Look at this appalling figure: Insull's three Chicago utilities—Commonwealth, Peoples Gas and Public Service—owned three subsidiaries. These three companies had invested in their subsidiaries' stocks some $170,000,000. These three subsidiaries were loaded with properties which Insull pushed upon them in the course of the practices outlined here. When the utility empire crashed and auditors went to work they cut the appraisal of the Chicago companies, principally because of the decline of these subsidiary stocks, some $90,000,000. This wiped out almost the whole surplus of these companies.

There were many rotten timbers in the Insull building. For one who loved to lecture utility magnates on the importance of low costs for money, Insull very often paid exorbitant prices for money. I found a case where, after interest, bankers' fees, discounts and all were deducted from a $9,000,000 bond issue, the cost of the money to the company was thirteen per cent a year. The truth is, therefore, that despite all the pretensions of the Insull drum beaters, his mighty empire was shot through with almost fatal financial weaknesses and that at the end of last year, when he was driving furiously to sell more stock to thousands of innocent investors, it was virtually bankrupt.

The Beginning of Insull's End

And now let us see the vast structure as it begins to crumble. This began in 1929. First we must understand that around 1928 Insull came face to face with the question of holding fast to his control of his great corporations. It is doubtful if in 1928 his own wealth was more than twenty-five or thirty million dollars at the most. That was not enough to control more than a fraction of the stock of his companies. Moreover this was the era of the investment trust—that strange time when a few dozen audacious promoters discovered how they could get control of other people's money in investment trusts and then use those funds in their own grandiose schemes of industrial conquest. Many a magnate awoke suddenly to find the mastery of his corporation had passed out of his hands.

Insull saw this danger. He observed that large blocks of stock of his companies were being bought by various investment trusts. One of these was in the hands of Cyrus S. Eaton, one of the most daring of these new promoters. Insull therefore immediately organized his first investment trust—the Insull Utilities Investments, Inc., in which he ultimately gathered some $245,000,000. That pretty much insured his control. He turned over to it the holdings of himself, his wife and his son in his companies. These amounted to only $9,765,000. In return he got 40,000 shares of preferred stock at $100 and 764,000 shares of common in Insull Utilities at $7.50. He got besides an option to purchase 200,000 shares more at $15. Ultimately these shares went to $149 before they declined. At one time his paper profit on these common stock holdings amounted to $130,000,000. They were worth $143,000,000. He had other profits on another investment trust he organized later. This is what Insull referred to when he said the day he left Chicago that he had been worth $170,000,000.

A Game You Can't Stop Playing

One other fact you must understand. It is the key to the whole story. Insull always raised funds for his companies by one method. He issued rights to his stockholders. Each year in each publicly owned company he would give stockholders the "right" to subscribe to additional stock. Thus in midsummer, 1929, Insull announced that stockholders of Middle West would be allowed to subscribe to 450,000 new shares at $200 a share. If you were a stockholder you

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When a Woman turns Hard

Wherein Willie Lord scores a hit with his wife — an occurrence which should be classified as news

By Dana Burnet

"I warn you that I know as much about antiques

I HAD been aware since my arrival in Manasquot, early in the summer, of certain startling changes in the person and circumstances of my friend Willie Lord. He no longer drove his ramshackle old truck. He owned a neat sedan of fancier make; and drove it soberly, without his old reckless flourish or his joyous recourse to the horn. Also, he had revised his own appearance until he was almost unrecognizable.

No more did he swagger happily through the village in knee boots, faded overalls and ragged sweater, a gallant figure indifferent to the disapproval of the more conventionally clothed. He appeared now, even on weekdays, in the unnatural costume that had been, in the care-free past, his Sunday suit. And most extraordinary of all, he wore a stiff collar with something in the nature of a necktie dangling from it.

This appalling metamorphosis saddened me. The reason for it, I told myself, was obvious. The year before, Willie had sold his old place at the junction of Main Street and the state highway to Mrs. Trubee, a wealthy member of our Manasquot summer colony, who wanted to convert the property into a park and to erect there a fountain in commemoration of her own benevolence. Willie, by devious means and devices, which I have described in a previous account of his wayward doings, had got a whacking good sum from the public-spirited lady. It was this sudden acquisition of riches, this cloudburst of affluence, which I was sure had worked the regrettable changes in Willie.

He had bought, and moved his family into, a new house on the state road about a mile out of the village. It was a modern, bungalow-type house of more than ordinary horribleness. Its singular lack of charm was accentuated by a huge, old red barn that towered in lonely dignity beside and above it. The barn, a relic of the past, was the only thing about the place that could possibly have belonged to the Willie Lord I had known. There was something about its great yawning doorway that reminded me of his former derisive, toothless grin.

I GRIEVED for him, as one grieves for any free soul fallen under the curse of riches. When I learned that he had gone into the business of selling clams and lobsters—actually *selling* them!—I despaired of him completely. In the old days, Willie would have scorned to dig a single clam more than was needed to sustain life in himself, his wife and his five children.

Then quite unexpectedly, one August day, he came—in his best suit and great tribulation of spirit—to call on me. Sensing his troubled state, I sat him down on my porch, produced beer from the ice-box, and waited. I hadn't long to wait.

"Wimmin," he blurted out, in almost Biblical lamentation, "is the root of all evil!"

"Yes, Willie," I said encouragingly.

"The way they kin git a-holt of a man, and worry him, and make his life mis'able, is somethin' that ain't in nature. Now ye take that woman o' mine. All the years I be'n married to her, she *ain't never nagged me—till now.* Times when we didn't have a cent to our names —times when we slept with the roof a-leakin' over our heads—she never let a holler outen her. Godfrey's sakes alive! She was some diff'rent in them days! Done her chores, cooked her vittles, and said nothin'. If I wanted to go clammin' or troutin' or trappin', it didn't make no odds to her. And if I come home at nightfall smellin' a mite strong and lookin' like the scarecrow out o' Jedi' Massey's cornfield, she didn't care no more'n nothin' at all. Al'ays had a Christian smile on her face and *my supper ready on the stove.* But here o' late—!" Willie paused, wiped his mouth with the back of his hand and glanced warily at me. "Cal'late ye've noticed I be'n sort o' diff'rent this summer?" he said, with an embarrassed cough.

"Well, yes, I have noticed a change," I admitted delicately.

WILLIE'S embarrassment gave place to honest indignation.

"Change? It's a gol-durn' rev'lution! Here I be'n goin' round the village all dressed up same's a corpse at a funeral —and why? Jest 'cause the woman, she wants I should be respect'ble! Yes, sir. She's got her heart set on respectifyin' me, and, by Gorry, if I don't think up somethin' purty soon to stop her, she's a-goin' to do it. She's got me goin' to the barber shop three times a week now, 'stead o' jest on Sat'day nights, same's I used to. And the wust of it is," confessed Willie, his voice rising to a cracked crescendo, "she's a-naggin' o' me to go into business."

"Into business?"

"Ey-ah!"

"What kind of business?" I asked.

"Somethin' respect'ble," said Willie dolefully.

"But I've heard," I said, "that you *were* in business. You're selling clams and lobsters, aren't you?"

He nodded; then despondently shook his head.

" 'Tain't enough," he stated morosely. "I done that to satisfy the woman, but she says 'tain't what folks'd rightly call a business. Come right down to it, what she wants is fer me to buy an interest into her uncle Mose Meeker's store."

I looked at him in shocked surprise and with deep sympathy. Moses Meeker, Mrs. Lord's uncle, was an unpleasant, pallid, pudgy little grub of a man who owned and operated the local dry-goods store. He was commonly supposed to possess the first dollar he'd ever made—and all the dollars and cents subsequent to it. His only generosity was to his own stomach; he was a rabid prohibitionist and had chronic dyspepsia. The atmosphere of his establishment was dyspeptic; you felt it when you went into the place.

"Oh, no, Willie!" I exclaimed. "Your wife doesn't want to cage you up in Mose Meeker's store!"

"Does too!" said Willie. "Gorry! I'd ruther git sent to the jail-house in Alfred than to team up with old Moses! I went int' his store onct to buy some flounder-hooks—and I come out with in-die-gestion! Can you see me, standin' back of a counter sellin' ladies' underwear and all like o' that?"

"No, I can't," I admitted. "It doesn't seem right, somehow."

"Jest what I says to the woman," Willie informed me. "S' I to her, ' 'Tain't moral,' s' I. 'If ye call it respect'ble fer a married man to know what every female in town is a-wearin' next to her hide,' s'I, 'then I don't,' s'I. But the woman, she says them things ain't sinful. She says they be notions."

"Notions, eh?"

"Ey-ah. She's got an answer to everythin', these days. Can't git 'round her to save my durn' neck. And the tarnation grief of it is," Willie said with almost a wail in his voice, "she's a-makin' my life so mis'able I can't hardly lay down fer a nap without I dream o' notions!"

"YOU'LL certainly have to do something about it, Willie," I said. "Have another bottle of beer?"

"Don't mind if I do. Gorry! That's another thing! If I wanted a drink o' somethin' besides well water in the old days I, by Godfrey, had it. But now!—Well, there! I can't sneak a jug o' cider int' the house without she finds it and pours it down the dreen."

"Willie," I said sympathetically, "life is hard."

"So's my cider," said Willie. "And all the better fer it. But when a woman turns hard on ye, the good Lord Jehovy help ye!"

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as you do." "Antiques?" repeated Willie blankly

Wallace Morgan

"Amen!" I said. It seemed to be the only thing I could say.

Willie Lord left my house in a state of comparative normalcy. That is, his collar had parted to permit his harassed chin to escape its enforced confinement, his string of a necktie had vanished into his coat pocket, and his characteristic grin had appeared, once or twice, in fitful acknowledgment of his plight. But, as ultimately he steered his course homeward down my hill, I had a mournful feeling that my sympathy—and my home-made beer—would prove no permanent solution to his troubles. He still had his problem to face. I wondered how he would face it.

A WEEK or so later I drove out to his place with a vague notion of ordering some lobsters. Actually I was curious to know what had happened to him.

I found him in what may be described as a state of chaos. He was leaning against an old elm tree in front of his barn, surrounded by a melancholy assortment of decrepit furniture.

"Well, Willie," I said, "what's this?"

Willie shook his head in utter despair.

"This here," he said, "is the last straw that bruk the camel's back. The woman, she's thrown out all our fambly goods and chattils. She went to Portland yistiddy and bought all new furniture fer the house. She's in there now"—he jerked his head toward the horrible bungalow that was his unhappy home—"pushin' that store furniture 'round and a-gloatin' over it, same's a young'un with a mess o' new toys. 'Tain't that I begrudge her the money she spent on it. But there! It makes me feel some bad to have to lug out all our old stuff and bury it in the barn."

"I understand, Willie," I said. "Naturally you have a sentiment for your old things."

He nodded, and glanced sadly from one article to another.

I sat down in one of his chairs.

"What have you decided about going into business with Mose Meeker?"

"Ain't decided nothin'. Be'n sort o' holdin' off, hopin' my luck'd change. But I cal'late my luck's left me, now I got money in the bank. Old Mose, he says I got to make up my mind purty soon, and fur 's I kin see, I might 's well say yes and git it over with. It'll put an end to the woman's naggin' me, 't any rate. And— What's that car stoppin' fer, ye s'pose?"

I turned. A large coupé, of expensive make, had pulled up at the side of the state road in front of Willie's place. As we stood watching it, a woman got out of the car and came toward us. She, too, was large and expensive. She was smartly dressed, and had an imperious glitter in her eye.

"How much for that chair?" she demanded of me. "That one you're sitting on?"

I rose in haste.

"Pardon me, Madam," I said, retreating. "This chair . . . these things . . . belong to Willie—to my friend here."

THE lady wheeled by the right flank and bore down on Willie.

"The chair's authentic, is it not?"

"Ma'am?"

"I asked you if it was genuine, but I can see it is. I warn you that I know as much about early American antiques as you do."

"Antiques?" repeated Willie blankly. Then, to my relief, I saw the old crafty gleam come into his watery blue eyes. His short, spare figure straightened.

"Well, now, Ma'am," he said, thoughtfully stroking his chin, "that there pertickler chair ain't rightly fer sale."

"Why not? You're in the antique business, aren't you? If you weren't, why should you have these things on display?" The lady made a sweeping gesture that included all of Willie's rejected household goods.

"Oh, ey-ah!" said Willie. "Oh, ey-ah, I'm in the antique business. I be'n in the antique business fer—uh—fer quite some time now. But, ye see, Ma'am, this chair belongs to my wife. It was in her fambly. It's a sort o' hairloom, and I can't sell it without I ask her." He turned quickly toward the bungalow and shouted: "Jenny! Oh, Jenny!"

The large and glittering lady glanced skeptically at me.

"I've had this worked on me before," she said.

"Have you?" I said.

"Yes. But I usually get what I want at my own price."

"I'll bet you do," I murmured admiringly.

The front door of the bungalow opened and the stringy figure of Mrs. Lord appeared.

Willie beckoned to her. I saw her look at the coupé waiting in the road; then at the three of us grouped under the elm. She came toward us across the yard, her sharp face thrust a little forward, her hands fumbling the gingham apron she wore.

"What is it, Willie?" she asked abruptly.

WILLIE grinned disarmingly. On his face I saw the peculiar look of innocence that told me his brain—the foxlike brain that had guided him through many a vital predicament—was functioning.

"This here lady," he said, "wants to buy this here chair." His explanatory gesture indicated the lady, the chair. "She's willin' to pay me a good price fer it, 'cause she knows a genuwine antique when she sees one."

"Ten dollars is my limit," said the lady.

"Twenty!" piped up Willie, automatically reacting to the stimulus of a trade. Then he relapsed into suavity. After all, it wasn't the money he wanted; it was his freedom, his masculine integrity, his life.

"Thing is," he said to Mrs. Lord, "I told the lady 'twas your chair. Be'n in your fambly mebbe a hund'ed—two hund'ed years, ain't it, Jenny?"

"Yes, 't has. That's right," agreed his wife.

"Ey-ah," said Willie; and added, with justifiable malice: "I know your pa set in it so long and so hard that when he come to die they had to pry him loose from it with a crowbar!"

"That ain't so! Why, Willie Lord! How can you—?"

The lady interrupted.

"I am not interested," she said austerely, "in family histories. On the other hand, I realize that the antique dealer isn't just a tradesman. He's also an artist, and as such he's entitled to his sentimental vagaries. I'll give you fifteen dollars for the chair and not one cent more."

"Sold," said Willie. "How 'bout it, Jenny?"

"Why—why, yes. I guess fifteen dollars is all right, though it does seem an awful lot to pay fer—"

"Sold!" bellowed Willie.

The lady purchaser looked slightly startled. Then she recovered her self-assurance. Opening her handbag, she took out three five-dollar bills and gave them to Willie.

"There you are," she said; and then, suddenly turning and beaming at me: "Would *you* mind," she chirruped, "just carrying the chair to my car?"

"Not at all," I said. "Oh, no! I'd be most happy—"

I carried the chair to the road. I put it—and the lady—into her coupé, which I believe I have said was large. "Thank you," she said. "The chair was worth almost twice what I paid for it. Good-by."

"Good-by," I said.

AS I turned back, I saw Willie standing with his arms folded across his chest, facing his wife. He was talking to her. I delayed my steps; I lingered. Shortly I saw Mrs. Lord with a gesture of remarkable abandon throw her arms around Willie's neck and hug him. Then she ran off toward the house. She vanished through its incredibly ornamental doorway. I hastened toward the elm tree.

"Well, Willie?" I inquired.

He grinned at me, and behind him the old barn grinned from its wide doorway in striking sympathy.

"I don't have to buy into Mose Meeker's store," said Willie. "Because I got a business o' my own. From now on I'm in the antique furniture business, which is one o' the most respect'ble businesses a man kin be in. 'Tain't only respect'ble. It's got some art to it. Yes, sir. I'm an artist, and I'm a business man, and I'm so gol-durn' respect'ble I need a drink o' cider to make me feel human." He looked at me, and cocked a sandy eyebrow above a bright and shining blue eye. "Let's us," said Willie, "adjourn this here meetin' int' the barn. I got a jug o' cider hid under a antique feed bucket up in the loft."

The next day—or it may have been the day after—as I was driving along the state road past Willie Lord's place I looked in and saw nailed to the elm tree in front of his barn a huge, hand-painted sign that read as follows:

W. LORD
Steam Clams, Lobstirs
AND
ANTIQUES

—and under the elm, stretched out on his beloved haircloth sofa, lay Willie the business man, fast asleep.

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Thunder Mountain

Continued from page 19

"You reckon? Aren't you sure, Kal?" queried Ruth, a doubt edging into her face.

"Gosh, you can't be shore of anythin' except death."

"Promise me you won't look up Leavitt," she entreated.

"Wal, that's easy. I promise. . . . But if I meet him—"

"Bore him an' rustle back here to tell me," interrupted Jake, coolly. "An' then I'll show you some real packin'."

Soon Kalispel sallied forth on his last visit to Thunder City. At Blair's cabin two packers were busy assorting and weighing packs. Burros, not yet saddled, stood haltered to the porch. Blair waved cheerfully to Kalispel. "We're leaving today." And Kalispel replied just as cheerfully, "So are we. Hope we see you on the trail." Sydney appeared in the rider's garb in which Kalispel had admired her so exceedingly. He suffered a divided pang—one of regret and the other of relief. Those proud dark eyes were not destined to shine upon him. They watched him pass by, intent and haunting as ever. But she made no motion.

On the hillsides and high parts of the benches the miners had returned to their blasting, digging, panning. But two miles of flooded claims along the stream had left hundreds of men idle. Therefore the main street of Thunder City presented the spectacle of a circus day in a small town.

KALISPEL hoped to escape notice in the crowd, and succeeded to some extent. He found Masters in his shack, a pondering and somber man.

"Howdy, Kal," he drawled, with those penetrating gray eyes hard on his visitor. "You look fine for a hombre who's just added another notch to his gun."

"Aw, I'm fine as silk. Leavin' today, Masters."

"Good. Did your brother give you my message?"

"All he said was that you'd be up to see me."

"Nix. I told him no—an' for you to rustle out of heah quick."

"Wal, he didn't tell me, the son-of-a-gun. What's up, old-timer?"

"Reckon I cain't find out all thet's goin' on in this heah gold camp, but the little I know is shore enough."

"Uh-huh. Wal, if it's enough for an old Texas steer like you, it'll be more'n enough for Kal Emerson. But come out with it."

"Leavitt took over Borden's property, on half shares an' debts, he claims. My show of friendship for you 'pears to have riled the judge. He politely sent me word to turn over my office an' my badge."

"The hell he did! Wal, of all the gall! Masters, you wouldn't think of that?"

"Wal, ordinarily I wouldn't. But I didn't seek this job. My friends shoved it on me. An' now most of them have packed an' gone. The bottom is droppin' out of this boom, Kal. I reckon I couldn't locate a dozen men who'd back me in any deal against Leavitt. So what is there in it for me?"

"Damn' little, if you're askin'," replied Kalispel, shortly. "But are you goin' to let Leavitt bluff you?"

"No man ever bluffed a Texas Ranger," drawled Masters. "I'm just sore enough to resign, pack an' get ready to leave with my friends—then call on Leavitt to leave my card."

"Your card? Ah-huh, I savvy," rejoined Kalispel, with a cool ring in his voice. "By thunder, I'd like to do that. But I promised Ruth I'd not look Leavitt up."

"Square of you. Thet girl is deservin', Kal. An' about the prettiest one I've seen since I left Santone."

"Old-timer, I'd shore feel better if I knew *you* was goin' to present my compliments to Leavitt. . . . Listen, this is what I came down to tell you. Leavitt is at the head of this bandit gang, an' he's runnin' it shore slick."

"Emerson, are you sure?" queried the Texan, leaning forward like a striking hawk.

"Hell, yes!" whispered Kalispel. "I stood under Leavitt's window an' heard him betray himself. He's also a common, low-down, two-bit thief, a second-hand murderer, an' a slick-tongued deceiver of women."

"An' don't forget he's a leader of Thunder Mountain vigilantes!"

"Masters, has he really carried it as far as that?"

"Rumors are flyin' thick as autumn leaves. I don't know what is true an' what false. But now I'll bet my guns thet Leavitt has gone through with it. He hasn't been seen downtown since you shot Borden. Nobody knows what's up, an' everybody's figgerin'. But for me you've about cleared it up."

"Ah-huh. You get my hunch. If Leavitt has organized a vigilance committee you can bet your last dollar the men in it are his holdup gang."

"Precisely. A damn' slick dodge! We underrated this man Leavitt. . . . An' now, Kal, my advice to you is rustle out of heah hell for leather!"

Kalispel got up with a cool little laugh and a sharp hitch of his belt.

"Shake. An' that's my advice to you."

"I'll trail you up street a ways."

Kalispel did not like the suspense in the Texan's mien and voice. There was something in the wind. The instant Kalispel got outside, he was amazed to find that the street that had been noisy and animated a few minutes before was now silent, empty except at the extreme lower end. There, strung across from Borden's Hall to the Last Chance Saloon, stood five masked men, armed with rifles.

Kalispel cursed as a fiery current ran along his veins. Vigilantes! He could not see the upper end of the street because it curved slightly. His thoughts centered around the query—did the presence of those vigilantes have to do with his visit to town? He decided to cut through the first alley between buildings to make the creek trail. Once back at his cabin, he and Jake could hold off any reasonable number of men.

THERE were no alleys near. He must go through a store or saloon. Faces appeared in doors across the street.

"*Hands up, Emerson!*"

The rough, deadly voice, nervous in its timbre, carried threat of instant death. Kalispel had heard that note before. Freezing in his tracks, he elevated his arms high above his head.

"Up they are!" he ejaculated, damning himself for overconfidence.

"Keep 'em thar." Cautious, heavy steps sounded with that voice. "Frisk him, Dan."

Rude hands jerked his guns from his belt. He heard the click of a hammer being raised, then felt the hard prod of a gun barrel against his back.

"March!"

Kalispel was marched up the street, where, at the end, five masked vigilantes led the way toward Leavitt's cabin and mill. Judging from the increasing hum and trample in the rear, all of Thunder City was in attendance. It seemed a long walk to Kalispel, and he had to muster all his nerve to dam emotions that might militate against his readiness to seize any opportunity.

"Halt!" ordered Kalispel's captor, when the procession had approached to within twenty paces of Leavitt's cabin.

"I'm kinda tired holdin' my arms up," complained Kalispel, as he halted, and slowly lowered them.

The five vigilantes in the lead lined up to one side. Kalispel heard the others stop behind. And from far back came the increasing roar of the trailing mob.

"Captain Leavitt," shouted the spokesman, "we have your man!"

THE cabin door stood wide open. A table and chairs on the porch had a businesslike look. Presently two miners came out, followed by Leavitt. He was white of face, and stern. His flaring gaze leaped upon Kalispel standing motionless in the open square and then swept over the vigilantes and to the approaching crowd, then back to the prisoner.

"Leavitt, what's the meanin' of this outrage?" demanded Kalispel, his voice carrying far. He might as well not have made a sound, for all the attention Leavitt paid to him.

"Let the crowd come close enough to hear the proceedings," ordered Leavitt.

The trampling of many feet slowed up behind Kalispel and spread in a half circle, until it was possible for him to see the people on both sides. This swerving of his gaze brought into his line of vision a scaffold, newly erected. Kalispel sustained his last shock, for with a realizing shudder that this instrument of frontier justice had been erected for him, he became a man of iron. Leavitt would never hang him.

"That's close enough," called out Leavitt, and then he appeared to fix his flaring eyes upon some man whose slow steps could be heard. "Masters, that applies to you, too."

"Wal, I reckon I'm sheriff of Thunder City," drawled the cool, easy voice of the Texan. It warmed Kalispel's heart. It meant something for him to grasp.

"Yes, and a damn' poor sheriff you are," retorted Leavitt. "Flaunting your friendship for this desperado in the face of the whole town!"

"Leavitt, I back my actions. Thet's why I'm heah. We might disagree as to Emerson's status. An' if this heah deal is a trial, as I reckon it is, you'll want it to stand the test of public opinion."

"Certainly. There's nothing secret about this trial. Emerson is before the vigilantes of Thunder City."

"Wal, in thet case somebody must represent him, an' I'll make thet my last official duty, after which I'll resign."

"Very well. We accept your stand for Emerson, and also your resignation."

Masters slowly came into the line of Kalispel's vision. Sight of the cool Texan flooded Kalispel's grim soul with gratitude. Whatever Masters meant, it seemed unreadable to anyone there, except Kalispel, who grasped the nerve of the man, the intention to befriend. But how he was to do it seemed inscrutable.

The Texan turned to Kalispel with slow, casual steps.

"Am I acceptable to you, Emerson?" he queried. "Looks like a high-handed procedure to me. But if these vigilantes mean to put you on trial I'm heah to see it's fair."

"Thanks, Masters," returned Kalispel. The Texan's words were potent, but negligible compared with the wonderful power and meaning of his gray eyes. Kalispel was swift to read that gaze. There could be no question of a fair trial here. Masters' action was merely a ruse to permit him to come forward, gradually to edge closer and closer to Kalispel, until when the situation reached its climax, he would be near enough for Kalispel to leap and jerk free Masters' two big guns.

"Judge, before you make a charge against the prisoner, may I ask what constitutes yore right to this procedure?" queried Masters, deliberately.

"I am captain of these vigilantes," replied Leavitt curtly.

"Wal, thet won't stand before the law. You were not elected. You appointed yoreself."

"But I was elected judge of this mining camp," parried Leavitt, with composure. "If you know the laws of gold-diggings you will agree that I have absolute authority."

"Wal, shore, aboot all claims, arguments, sales an' exchange, an' all thet. But hardly to make arrests an' build scaffolds. That ought to be my job."

"Masters, we won't split hairs over that," declared Leavitt, with cold finality. "Emerson is on trial. And I'm his judge."

"Air you puttin' him on trial for gunplay?"

"There is no law on the frontier against even breaks."

"Wal, then, what's Emerson's offense?" demanded the Texan, sharply.

Judge Leavitt seated himself at his table, and arranged papers before he replied.

"Emerson is a bandit."

Masters wheeled to take a long stride toward Kalispel.

"You heah thet?" he called.

"I'm not deaf, Masters."

"Wal, what you got to say aboot it?"

"Leavitt is a damned liar."

Again Masters faced the porch. Kalispel felt like a tiger about to leap. The Texan stood a little to the left, a good long jump distant, and his black guns hung in plain sight, as easy to draw as if they had been on Kalispel himself.

"Judge, I've heahed yore accusation. An' I heahed Emerson's denial. I mean no offense when I say that his word before the court is as good as yores. You'll have to furnish proof."

"That is what we propose to do," rejoined Leavitt, loudly. "Keep quiet, there in the crowd. This is a trial. . . . Jones, step forward."

THE smaller of the two men who had come out of the cabin with Leavitt strode forward to face the vigilantes. He looked like any other middle-aged miner.

"State your evidence against this prisoner," ordered Leavitt.

"He robbed me," returned Jones, in a resonant, frank voice. "It happened at night, two weeks ago come Wednesday, just after six o'clock. I was comin' from my claim in the dark. Just off one of them deserted tents down the crick a man stepped out behind me an' jabbed a gun in my back. He asked for my dust. I had two bags, one dust an' the other nuggets. I gave them up."

"Did you recognize Emerson?" asked the judge.

"No; thet is, not his person. But I shore did his voice. I'd heard thet often."

Masters turned to take another step in Kalispel's direction.

"What you say to thet?"

"Sheriff, it's another rotten lie," called Kalispel, piercingly. "An' Jones couldn't look at me with it, unless he knew I'd never get out of this alive."

"Matthews, step forward," ordered the judge, to the second man, who was tall, pale-visaged and less convincing. "State your case against the prisoner."

(Continued on page 34)

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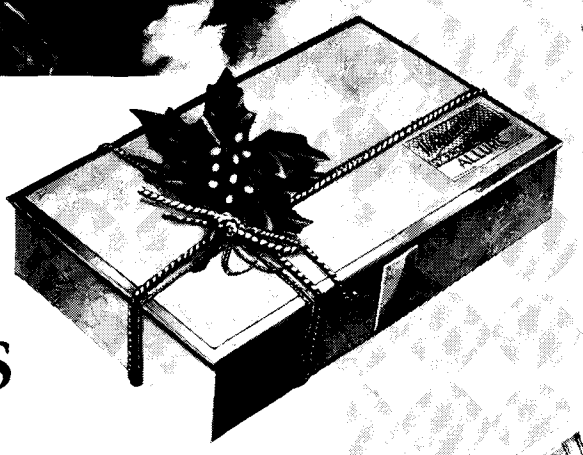

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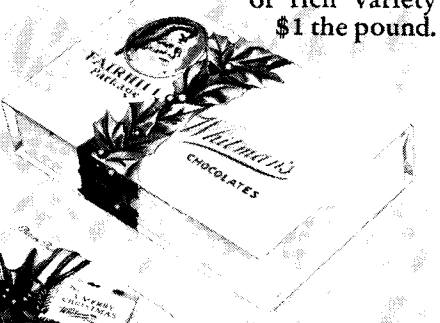

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Thunder Mountain

Continued from page 32

"Emerson held me up, Jedge," replied Matthews. "It was last Saturday night, at about half after eight. It was right in town. An' he stepped out of the shadow of Spence's store. He had a scarf over his face, but it slipped down a ways when he was friskin' me. An' I recognized him easy. He took my gold, watch, an' guns."

"Matthews, you say this occurred last Saturday night at half past eight, and that you recognized Emerson perfectly?" queried the judge.

"Yes, sir."

LEAVITT waved the witness aside and again turned to the sheriff. "Masters, that seems conclusive to me. There's no doubt in my mind Emerson is guilty of all these holdups, and shootings, too. . . . I'll put it to a vote."

"Never mind havin' yore vigilantes vote yet," returned Masters, with sarcasm. "The trial ain't over."

He faced around to Kalispel, the third time with unobtrusive step.

"Kalispel, you heahed?"

"Yes."

"An' I reckon thet's another lie?"

"It shore is."

"Wal, it sounded fishy to me," replied the Texan. "An' if you can recall shore jest where you was on Saturday night at half past eight, I'll take yore word for it."

"I was—" began Kalispel, readily, when suddenly he remembered that on the hour in question, Sydney Blair was alone with him in his cabin.

"Wal, speak up, an' make it plain to this listenin' crowd," said Masters.

Kalispel let out a hard laugh. It did not make any difference to Leavitt and his vigilantes whether he cleared himself or not. And in another moment he would be leaping for Masters' guns.

"Sorry, old-timer," his voice rang out. "I reckon I can't remember."

"There!" flashed Leavitt, his shaking hand extended. "Condemned by his own lips!"

The crowd stirred to restless shifting of feet and sibilant whispers. Then Kalispel was transfixed at sight of Sydney Blair running in to face Leavitt.

"Rand Leavitt," she cried, in her high tones that pierced to every listening ear in the multitude, "your tool, Matthews, has not condemned Emerson, but himself as a liar—and *you* as a worse one!"

"*What?*" hissed Leavitt, leaping up, to lean forward with purpling face.

"Kalispel Emerson absolutely could not have robbed Matthews last Saturday night, at half past eight," rang Sydney's vibrant voice.

"And why not?" shouted Leavitt, furiously.

"Because he was with me—in his cabin!"

It was then that the jealous lover took precedence over the presiding judge.

"In his cabin . . . alone?"

"Yes, alone."

"Sydney Blair! *You?* . . . My promised wife! . . . What—why were you there?"

"I went there to tell him what a villain you are—to tell him I had broken my engagement to marry you . . . to beg him to—to forgive me and take me back again!"

The transformation that swift poignant speech wrought in Leavitt was monstrous to behold. The suave gentleman, the confident mining boss, the cold, grim judge went into eclipse. And a malignant, mouthing, passion-ridden devil leaped off the porch.

"Look there, woman!" he shouted, strident with hate, as he pointed with quivering finger at the scaffold. "You shall see your lover hanged!"

This seemed to Kalispel to be the moment for him to leap for Masters' guns, kill the maddened Leavitt, and then turn loose his fire upon his captors. But Sydney stood in the way. There would be other shooting besides his, a wild tumult, pandemonium. He dared not risk harm to her. Masters edged back toward him. There was time. He would wait.

"Men! Seize him," yelled Leavitt. "By God, he hangs!"

The answer was a woman's piercing cry, whether Sydney's or another's, Kalispel never knew. And at the same instant the solid ground shook under his feet.

"*Hell's fire!*" shrieked a vigilante, suddenly gone crazy. "The mountain! The mountain! . . . *Run for your lives!*"

EVERY spectator looked. The vast slope was waving like a sea. And on the instant a groaning, straining rumble came from the depths. Far up, a whole bare ridge began to slide.

"*Avalanche!*"

"*A slide—a slide!*"

"*Thunder Mountain!*"

These pregnant cries were drowned in the united yell of the crowd. And this was lost in a terrific thunder that came unmistakably from a mountain mass in movement.

Terror clapped on Kalispel, but when he saw Sydney sway and fall he leaped out of his paralysis to snatch her up in his arms and back away from the awesome spectacle.

The vigilantes were in full flight with the rest of the crowd. Masters passed Kalispel, yelling words that could not be heard. Leavitt had run from the lee of the cabin to look up and see the slow, waving descent of sections of slope, of ridges and mounds. The earth seemed shaken to its core. Thunder that was not thunder filled the air.

Leavitt seemed suddenly bereft of his senses. He dashed a few steps after the crowd only to whirl and dash back. No sense of escape actuated him. He bounded up on the porch and into the cabin.

What had been rumble and thunder died in a crash as if the earth were rent asunder. A great slide piled down on Leavitt's mill, crushing, shoving, covering the chutes, and at last, as if by magic, obliterating the mill. Out of the thick, rolling mass of mud, huge bubbles broke to let out puffs of dust.

The mill was gone and with it went the splintering crash. Hoarse shouts of men, sounding far away, pierced Kalispel's ears. He backed against a boulder, still holding the girl, who appeared to be regaining consciousness. Masters stood by him, holding his arm, shouting. Kalispel did not listen. The spectacle fascinated them, and when Leavitt appeared in the door of his cabin acting like a man bereft of his senses, they were rooted to the spot.

His frenzy, his wringing hands, his voiceless yells were eloquent of something that was gone! gone! gone! Kalispel understood then that not until this tragic moment of catastrophe had Leavitt known of the loss of his gold.

His pale face vanished from the dark doorway. And that instant, with a rumble and a shake the mass of slope let loose in a landslide, to move down upon the cabin. The roof caved in, and earth poured down like water into a vessel.

(To be concluded next week)

She'd better be Nice

Continued from page 13

married, some years later, to Dr. Timothy Moran, an oculist. Lois went to school in Pittsburgh but decided, when she was five or six years old, that she would be either a dancer or an actress. Dr. Moran enrolled with the medical corps when the United States entered the war and died of pneumonia in a Georgia cantonment. Their home shattered again, Mrs. Moran decided to take her daughter abroad. If Lois had failed as a child prodigy in Hollywood she might have become a child prodigy at some American university. At fourteen, still in Paris, she passed her college entrance examinations.

This was not the first indication of the precocity which has marked her rise.

She had been in Paris about a year, and was only twelve, when she conceived the notion that it would be a good idea to dance at the opera. She trudged down to the Paris Opera House and requested an audience with the ballet master. A young woman assistant was amused by her request and she was immediately admitted to the ballet school.

She worked hard; at night her muscles ached from the strain of dancing, and it was not easy, during the next two years, to carry on preparations for the college entrance examinations. But she was given encouragement occasionally by being permitted to join the ballet for actual performances.

Mr. Samuel Goldwyn, the screen magnate, went abroad, during the first part of 1925, to look for potential movie stars. In the back of his mind were plans for a super-production to be called Romeo and Juliet and to be set, more or less, on the Shakespeare version.

Mr. Goldwyn knew his Shakespeare. He knew that early marriages were customary in the Venice of that day and that Juliet, by modern standards, was a mere child. So he advertised in the Paris newspapers for a child actress. Lois Moran saw the notice, knew that she was a child and hoped that she was an actress. She wrote to Mr. Goldwyn and the result was an invitation to visit him at his hotel. When he saw her he decided to postpone Romeo and Juliet. Within the next year, he said, he intended to make a movie out of Stella Dallas, a recent best seller. Lois was exactly the type for the daughter; a contract would be arranged if she would call at his office in New York.

She Decides to Sing

Accusations that Lois Moran is a mother's girl and does nothing without her guidance and consent grew out of their return to the United States in the summer of 1925. There is an element of truth in the theory, but it is not the whole truth. Neither mother nor daughter was convinced, as they crossed the Atlantic, that it was wise to accept the screen offer. Lois' real ambition was the stage, not the movies.

Mrs. Moran took charge. She decided to find out whether any opening in the theater was possible and she made her plans with all the adroitness of the innumerable mothers who take their blond offspring to Hollywood.

The difference between Mrs. Moran and these Hollywood mothers lay in the fact that she was successful. Arriving in New York, she registered at the Algonquin Hotel because she knew that playwrights and theatrical managers went there daily to hear the latest dirt about one another. On the first or second day Lois entered the dining-room at the lunch hour. She wore a simple black frock with a white lace collar. She was a lovely child, radiant and untouched. At a near-by table was Marc Connelly, the playwright; he was pondering the selection of a cast for a fantasy, The Wisdom Tooth, which was soon to be produced. One character was a fairy and Lois, with her virginal youth, seemed to fit the part exactly.

Mr. Connelly obtained an introduction, learned that she had stage aspirations and suggested that she apply for the part. She went on the road with The Wisdom Tooth, but Sam Goldwyn renewed his movie offer before the show opened in New York. A contract at $500 a week was negotiated.

The fame which came to Lois through Stella Dallas made it possible for Mrs. Moran to obtain lucrative contracts. Her daughter was one of the best-paid stars in Hollywood and made pictures for Fox, Columbia and other studios. She remained for four years, surviving the cataclysmic advent of the talkies. She made a great deal of money but she was not, discernibly, getting anywhere. It was while she was making movies, and feeling somewhat frustrated, that Lois made the gesture which terminated, so far as it existed, domination by her mother. She decided that she would learn to sing. Everyone, including Mrs. Moran, discouraged this ambition.

Ultimately, after Mr. La Forge had taken her under his wing and had taught Lois the limitations as well as the potentialities of her voice, she was able to say: "I did this all by myself; no one encouraged me to sing." But first she abandoned Hollywood for Broadway. In the fall of 1930 she got a good part in This is New York, by Robert E. Sherwood. She had to go back to California to make another movie but was ready, in 1931, to stand or fall on the quality of her voice.

Opera Next

Many a prima donna of light opera was heard when a cast was being selected for Of Thee I Sing. They were rejected in favor of Lois Moran.

At the moment her future is uncertain. It seems likely that Of Thee I Sing will keep her busy for many months to come. When it finally closes she may stay on Broadway or may return, for a time, to Hollywood. She has been nursing, for the past year, a secret ambition which is credible only in the light of her ability, the Moran ability, to do the impossible. This is singing in grand opera. Even Lois' most devoted friends feel that this is far beyond her reach, that her voice is entirely inadequate. But these same friends are making quiet wagers that some day, if the intention persists, she will be heard from the stage of the Metropolitan Opera House.

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Amateur Bride

Continued from page 8

curtain in the center of the Metropolitan stage, he would not have budged. His jaw protruded, giving his face a square and slightly unpleasant appearance. He stood quite still—so still that Miss Schuyler, knowing he was there, was yet forced to look up again to make sure she was right. Her own eyes flashed with anger. It was plain she had no intention of relenting.

"You are making yourself conspicuous," she murmured rapidly.

Wright leaned over and spoke for her ear alone: "I did that the moment I stood up, but if you don't dance with me you'll soon find that we are being conspicuous together."

"This is unbelievable!" she said in the same low tone. To her it was unbelievable. She had had occasion to handle rude men, even an occasional drunk, but never before had she been called upon to face a calculated threat. "I tell you I don't wish to dance."

"At present I'm ridiculous alone," said Wright quietly, "but if you don't change your mind, I assure you there will be two of us." This, he realized, was a fight. He hadn't been looking for one, but here it was and the only thing he could conceive of doing with a fight was to win it. "I'm sorry, but since I'm here I'll stay as long as necessary."

ABRUPTLY she arose. "At least," she said, her lips trembling with anger, "you have shown me how to get rid of you."

Wright, moving a chair out of her way, did not answer. He was content with the victory attained and hopeful of a victory to come. The music had only just started and, as was the pet fad of the day, the ultra-fashionable crowd was hanging back from the all-but-empty floor. It had been Miss Schuyler's purpose to dance once around and summon Mr. Burnham with her eyes to cut in. Failing that she would leave her partner where, if he continued to stand, he would have plenty of company. Should the worst come to the worst, and he followed her, she would make her excuses to Mrs. Burnham and go. But once they began to dance her schemes faded from her mind, drugged by the narcotic of unity in motion.

Perhaps because Wright had the sense not to speak, her illusion was soon complete. He became something impersonal. He held her with the art of a master, not too close, nor too high, nor too low. She was alone, yet not alone. Her feet moved in accord with something deeper than rhythm or music. Nothing could reach her, nothing could touch her—not even he who held her. His bulk became a moving bulwark of which she was a part—a measured billow in which she was immersed. Her person safe, her thoughts were free to wander where they would. Dancing with this stranger, she could be dancing with any man or with the god of her dreams. Best of all, she could be alone—alone!

The music came to a fatal pause. So soon? Wright was bowing to her from his height. "Thank you," he said.

The charm broken, she looked up at him. Their eyes met, and in his was the gleam of the tolerant conqueror. For the first time they stood face to face, she very erect because he was so tall. The dance faded out, leaving only the memory of the bitter struggle which had preceded it. Who was this man? How had he dared do such a thing? All she knew of him was what Mrs. Burnham had said—that he was a mining expert and the guest of honor because Mr. Burnham wanted something out of him. Yet he had done more than humiliate her—he had beaten her in an out-and-out battle. A faint premonition seized her, a fear that what had happened might happen again. All she was and that her people had been before her rose in revolt. Her lips parted.

"Don't say it," Wright murmured. "Dance with me instead."

"Since probably I would have to say it sometime," she replied evenly, "it had better be now. I enjoyed dancing with you while I was dancing; I shall never dance with you again. I've had men rude to me before, but they were easily handled. Yours wasn't rudeness—it was brutality. You belong in a world I've only read about—the world of catch-as-catch-can. I have only one weapon against your way of fighting; I can easily keep away from where you are."

While she spoke the color in Wright's cheeks had steadily deepened, but the quality of his gaze did not change. It enveloped her. It evinced a constant and unvarying curiosity. It appeared to be striving to unwrap her, fold by fold. She turned and left him, but he continued to stare at the spot where she had been. In fact, to him, she had not gone. She remained before him, not as a vision, but in her flesh and blood. He could see her forbidding eyes, dark beneath arched brows, her mobile lips and her uplifted chin. Her youth, evasive in its suggestion of innocence coupled with generations of sophistication, was an actual presence. He could still feel the roundness and the warmth of her unconscious body, but that which had held no secret while in his arms had now become, in itself, the one problem of all problems worth solving.

When Wright said good night to his host, Mr. Burnham made the mistake of looking up hopefully into his face. Wright started to go but turned back.

"I suspect you, Burnham, of having mixed business and pleasure in a very kindly way. It isn't a fashion I fancy, but since you started it, here goes: At the risk of seeming ungrateful I might as well put you out of your pain. I'm not going to Korea."

"Not going! Why, my dear fellow—I was sure; I mean I thought— When you said— Really, Wright, can't you think it over until tomorrow? Let me come around at ten and talk to you. You know you promised. You said you would give us your decision tomorrow at eleven."

WRIGHT felt sorry for him. If the misguided idiot hadn't thrown this party he would have had his heart's desire. How was that for an ironic joke? What if he told him? But no, it wouldn't do and it wouldn't help—it would only make his suffering ten times worse.

"Come around if you like," he said, "and I'll tell you again when the clock begins to strike. That will make me a man of my word both ways. I'm sorry, Burnham, but I mean it. You will only be wasting our time."

Mrs. Burnham stared resentfully at his receding back. "I don't see why you should mind, Harford. As far as I am concerned I'm glad. I can give myself the treat of not knowing Mr. Wright in the future."

"Remember that the next time you want a mink coat," said Mr. Burnham bitterly as he signed the check and handed over a fifty-dollar tip, "because that's apt to be the price of your treat. What you can't get through your head is that a favorable report on anything in Korea from Wright is worth about a million more in hard cash than the same report by anybody else."

In the meantime, Henry Morton, who had refused to replace the truant Mr. Delamont at the Burnham dinner before Margaret Schuyler had accepted the task, had managed to be on hand to take her home. He had known Margaret since she wore rompers. When he was a boy she had been a baby, when he was in college she had been far too young for the prom, but now she was as much a woman as he was a man—all of which is merely by way of saying that two from nine need not be the same as twenty-seven from thirty-four. But she was in one of her moods tonight when you couldn't tell if she were girl or woman. Incidentally, never had he seen her looking lovelier—not even at her coming-out.

ON THAT occasion Morton was swept off his feet, something that had seldom happened to him before and never since. He had passed it off as the kindly college grad giving a youngster a whirl at her first party, but inside he knew he was hard hit. And frightened. From his earliest recollection it had been drummed into him that any woman will marry a man for his millions and that his only safe chance of escape from the danger of being a sap lay in picking one of the perfectly nice girls who had half, or even a fourth, as much as he. Everybody knew that Margaret, comparatively speaking, hadn't a nickel.

He had fled. Since that date he had fled from many another woman, but with this difference—to Margaret he had always come back, to the others never. For a time he had been accused of monopolizing her to her hurt, but gradually his inaction had worn that down, or perhaps people had merely got tired of saying it. Anyway it was she who was being accused, now, by some of stubbornly waiting for Morton and by others of playing for Morton's cash. Nobody appreciated the real truth, not even she or he, but vaguely she was beginning to suspect it. Lying back in the corner of his town car, she regarded him with troubled eyes.

No, he was thinking, she had never looked lovelier. It made him uneasy. He wished, as he had wished a hundred times before, that he might take her in his arms—but he had never done it yet and he wasn't going to now. Perhaps sometime—even probably—but not now, not until he was sure. But as to how he was to make himself sure that Margaret, if she loved him, loved him for himself alone, he had no idea and no plan beyond continuing to hang around.

"Have a good time?" he asked.

"No. A queer thing happened. A man made me dance when I said I wouldn't."

"Somebody you don't know?"

"The guest of honor, but I hadn't really met him. I was late."

"Well, you can't expect to go to people's dinners, eat their food, drink their liquor, and then turn down the guest of honor. What was the matter with him? Was he old, ugly or couldn't he dance?"

She stared at him. "Yes, he could dance. But that wasn't it. You don't understand. He made me. Have you ever been whipped till you gave in?"

"I've never been whipped at all," said Morton.

"No; I suppose not."

Her eyes left his face definitely. She did not speak again except to say good

(Continued on page 36*)*

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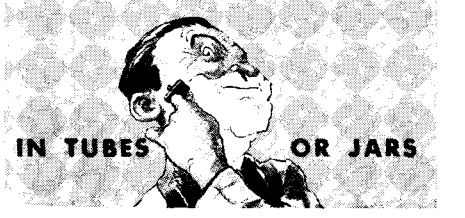

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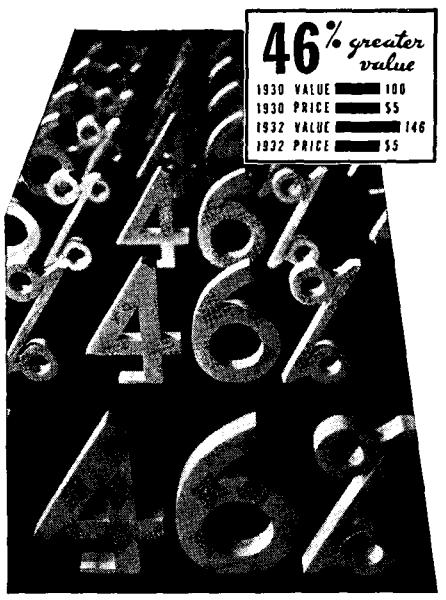

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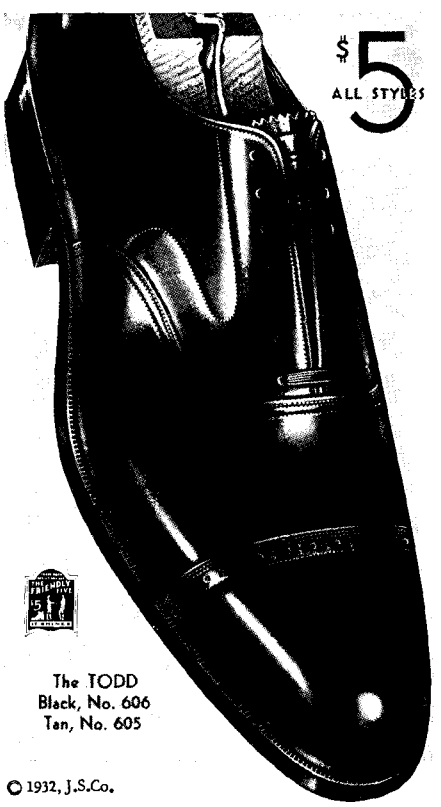

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Friendly to the Feet

(Continued from page 35)

night. She too had been thinking back to the coming-out party when she had fallen in love with Henry Morton. It wasn't anything she could have helped, was it? He had been wonderful to her that evening. Her heart had opened; he had stepped in, and the door had closed. But now, after nine years, there was something she wanted to tell him and she couldn't; but perhaps it was because she could hardly tell herself. No wonder she looked eighteen, since she felt as troubled as at eighteen.

Sitting in front of her modest dressing table, she pushed the straps off her shoulders and gazed at herself wonderingly. Yes, Mr. Wright could dance. But it hadn't been dancing; it had been something strange, a new element in which she had floated and might easily have been carried away. Personally, she assured herself, he had had nothing to do with it.

WRIGHT, who could dream dreams and make them pay, had all the man-of-action's scorn for the dreamer. Equally did he scoff at saws, sayings, maxims, axioms and hoodoos. For "look before you leap" he had substituted throughout his life "if you leap far enough you don't have to look." But the events at Burnham's dinner—or rather the one event during the entire stretch of that arid evening—gave him pause. For the first time in many a day he took stock of himself. It was not that he was looking before he leaped, for he knew well enough he had already leaped. What he was puzzled about was where he had landed.

In the course of his hectic career he had known a lot of women in a lot of ways. He had taken them in his stride and made no bones about it; here today and gone tomorrow. He had never lied to them or to himself. High and low, he had treated them alike. With the possible exception of Meg of the Dos Picos bar they had never made a dent in his armor of preoccupation, and she only because he considered her the most adequately equipped human being alive. He had never so much as flirted with the idea of marriage and he had never been in love. At the present moment, however, he was determined on marriage and believed himself to be in love. That, he decided, was where he had landed.

He was sitting in his office, a corner room on the nineteenth floor of the Exploitation Building. Neither the rent nor the use of the solid mahogany cost him a cent; they were merely perquisites to his retainer as consulting engineer and member of the board of the Dos Picos mine. His only expense was the salary of his secretary, Albert Jones, whom he invariably addressed as Menelik, for reasons known to himself alone. Wright rang for him. "Get Mr. Peter Stevens."

"On the phone?"

"No."

Stevens arrived in due course. He was so short, round and dapper that his intimates sometimes referred to him as Peterkin. The nickname, whenever he heard it, infuriated him. He peddled bonds and out of what he made he paid his dues in the three smartest clubs in New York. Wright was his best customer, though he had run into him by the merest fluke. No wonder he answered Jones' summons on the run.

"Stevens," said Wright, "are you a member of the Line?"

All the happy anticipation died from Stevens' face; it turned white. "Yes," he answered, and immediately his lips set in a stubborn but ridiculous pucker.

"Don't scare yourself to death," said Wright. "All I want from you is the latest issue of the club's register and a list of the names on the waiting list in the order they are due to come up. Anything unethical about that?"

"No," said Stevens after a pause, "not if that's all there is to it. But I don't want to leave any doubts in your mind, Mr. Wright. The Line is a peculiar institution; you might call it the last stand of the Old Guard. Without reflecting on you in any way, though you're my best customer—I mean because you're my best customer—I'm forced to tell you I can't possibly put your name up for the Line."

"You'll never get the chance," said Wright promptly, "as long as you and I live. Does that help?"

"You mean about the lists you want?"

"Yes."

"It seems a fair enough deal. I'll get them for you," and started to go.

Wright stopped him. "Just one thing more. When is the next meeting of the committee on elections?"

Stevens frowned, puzzled. What was Wright's game? Whom was he after? "In October," he answered.

"I'd like to have the lists today."

"I'll get them to you inside an hour."

When they came Wright studied the register carefully, summoned Jones and dispatched a cable to London. In the course of an inspection of the by-laws, coupled with the present membership, he determined the number of possible admittances. He rang for Jones again.

"Menelik, here is a list of candidates for election to the Line. Times are hard—harder on this particular class of people than anybody imagines. Here's your job and see that you perform: Find out how many of the candidates could stand the gaff of initiation fees and dues if they were elected next October."

"Right, sir," said Jones and turned on his heel.

"One minute," said Wright, amused. "How are you going to go about it?"

"I'm going to call them up and ask them."

"From here?"

"No, sir; from a pay station. I'll be secretary to the father of one of the candidates—some father who is booked to sail for Europe, preferably tonight."

"You may raise your own pay," said Wright. "The usual amount."

WITHIN two weeks, and without further assistance from Peter Stevens, John Wright's name was posted for membership in the Line, sponsored by two members so influential that his election assumed the proportions of a threat. Nobody could have imagined, however, that it would succeed in October—that is, nobody except Wright himself.

As a matter of fact, the job was not as hard as it looked. Only one candidate had had to be bought off—in a nice roundabout sort of way—to bring his name within the dead-line when the deluge of refusals had spent its full force. The men, including the troubled Stevens, who had been debating the wisdom of entering a blackballing letter, had dallied, thinking they had plenty of time, until it was too late.

By the irony of circumstance and the laws of probability Peterkin Stevens was given credit for a masterly *coup de main*. Nobody said it aloud since it could not be proved, but it was generally felt that he had engineered the deal from start to triumphant finish and had been well paid for it. In the innocence of his heart he consented to act as Wright's cicerone on the occasion of his first informal visit to the club. They entered the combination lounge and bar together. Wright dominated the crowded room from the moment he came in.

Only one of the members who happened to be in the room felt strong enough to resist the new influence: Henry Morton, whom nobody had ever dreamed of calling Harry and who was secure behind a bulwark of name, fame and a mountain of ancestral cash. At the moment he was occupying the largest and deepest chair in the room.

"I think this will be a safe chair for you, Mr. Wright," Morton said. He uncoiled his legs and arose languidly.

He could have said it with a different intonation and it would have raised a laugh, but as he chose to say it, it caused a sudden silence. Instantly the twinkle went out of Wright's eyes. Scorning the advantage that his height gave him, he accepted the chair at once. Looking up from its depths at Morton, he broke the silence.

"I admit," he said, his voice assuming a new and startling incisiveness, "that it fits me a lot better than it does you."

FROM that moment he was made, and yet more was to follow. William, the head doorman, himself brought in a card. Wright read it and sprang to his feet with surprising alacrity for one of his size. Before he could start for the door his caller had entered. He was a sprightly little man with an eyeglass and a drooping mustache, but otherwise faultlessly turned out.

"Doddy, for the love of Mike!" exclaimed Wright. "How did you know I was here?"

"Jones," said the newcomer in explanation. "I'm in a hurry or I wouldn't have pushed in."

"Gentlemen, this is Ashby," said Wright by way of general introduction. "They all know their own names, Doddy; if you're curious, ask them. It's my first appearance."

Somebody offered a cocktail. Ashby declined but said he could do with a sherry and bitters. Nobody had any sherry. Wright apologized.

"It's just as well, Jack," said Ashby. "I told you I'm in a hurry and I meant it. We've got exactly three hours to do a week's work before I sail."

"You must have flown up."

"Yes. No use wiring until I knew the bally thing would get here, and then, you see, I was here already! Haw!"

The engaging thing about Ashby's laugh was that he never did more than begin it. He and Wright went out arm in arm—at least he had his shoulder pushed into Wright's elbow.

Peter Stevens felt a comforting glow light up in his heart and start to spread. He doubted whether any of these men would venture to call him Peterkin again. At this point in his thoughts a youngish member who had failed to recognize Ashby said his face looked familiar and asked who he was.

"Lord Ashby," said Peter cheerfully. "Chairman of the board of Exploitation, Limited, and in his spare time master of the Ballentree."

"I congratulate you, Peterkin," said Morton. "Never in my life have I seen a shady deal so perfectly stage-managed from start to finish and I hope you made a lot out of it."

To the amazement of all who knew him Stevens did not explode. "Henry," he said quietly, "you are a liar and I can prove it. If you had any brains you would know you're a liar. I have a good mind to report you to the Committee on Deportment."

"You needn't bother," said Morton coolly, "any more than I shall bother to slap your round face for calling me a liar. I shall resign from the Line as from today."

"No, you won't," said Stevens with the sudden smile which was his sole winning charm. "I know you better than that. Think it over. You can't, because if you did, you'd be a coward as well as a liar."

(To be continued next week)

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Now I've got you

Continued from page 17

picked up the pen that Brownie had used and began to write the signature Brownie had written. His first attempt at imitation was good enough to satisfy most bank tellers. But Talbot wasn't satisfied. He kept on writing the signature over and over again.

Brownie raised his head. "I mean I won't have anything to do with it," he said. "That's flat." He saw the paper on which Talbot had been writing his signature. He saw what it meant. He jumped up.

"You aren't going to do anything about it either," he shouted.

Brownie reached for the shotgun on the wall. Talbot hit him behind the ear as his hand reached the gun. Brownie went down. When he got up Talbot had the poker. His first blow broke Brownie's arm. His second blow knocked him unconscious. Brownie slumped down on the cabin floor.

Talbot worked fast. He got a piece of light line from the deck and a chunk of iron with a hole in it that they had used as an anchor for the skiff which lay alongside. Talbot tied the free end of the line around Brownie's ankles. He dragged Brownie out on deck and rolled him overboard and threw the piece of iron in after him.

IT WASN'T a one-man job to get the shantyboat out into the river but he did it. He dropped down the river twenty miles into another bayou and anchored at dark well out of sight of the river traffic.

He whetted his jackknife to a razor edge. Then deliberately, precisely, he made a deep cut across his cheek. When he had drawn the cut together with surgeon's tape and stopped the bleeding as well as he could, he drank a pint of corn whisky, and went to bed.

Talbot stayed in the bayou for three weeks, until the cut had healed. He ran down the river until he came to a town. He tied the skiff up to the dock and walked to the railway station and bought a ticket for Louisville.

He bought a small open roadster and drove with the top down, by leisurely ways, to Chicago. He could afford to take his time, if he lived economically. He could wait.

When the scar was a white line across a cheek tanned by long exposure to the sun and wind he drove to Albany. He got a South Granby telephone book. He made discreet inquiries. When he was ready he drove over to South Granby and called at the surrogate's office.

"My name," Talbot said, "is John T. Cutter."

"If you can prove it," the surrogate said, "you can collect a hundred thousand dollars."

"You don't remember me," Talbot said. He rubbed the scar on his cheek with the gesture that Brownie had made so familiar to him.

"I wouldn't say I do and I wouldn't say I don't," Hamill said. "It's been seventeen years—and you've changed."

"Yes," Talbot said, "I've changed."

"But I will say," Hamill continued, "I will say that you've got that same scar that John T. Cutter had. And the same way of stroking it."

"What do I do now?" he asked the surrogate.

"Come in here tomorrow morning," Hamill said. "I'll have the papers and the executors here. If the executors are satisfied that you're John T. Cutter, that's all there is to it."

When Talbot entered the surrogate's office the next morning a young man jumped up and held out his hand and said, "Hello, John."

Talbot shook hands with him gravely. He reflected that the young man must have been a boy seventeen years ago. "I'm afraid I don't remember you, sir," he said. He smiled. "Should I remember you?"

The young man grinned. "No," he said. "I never saw you before in my life."

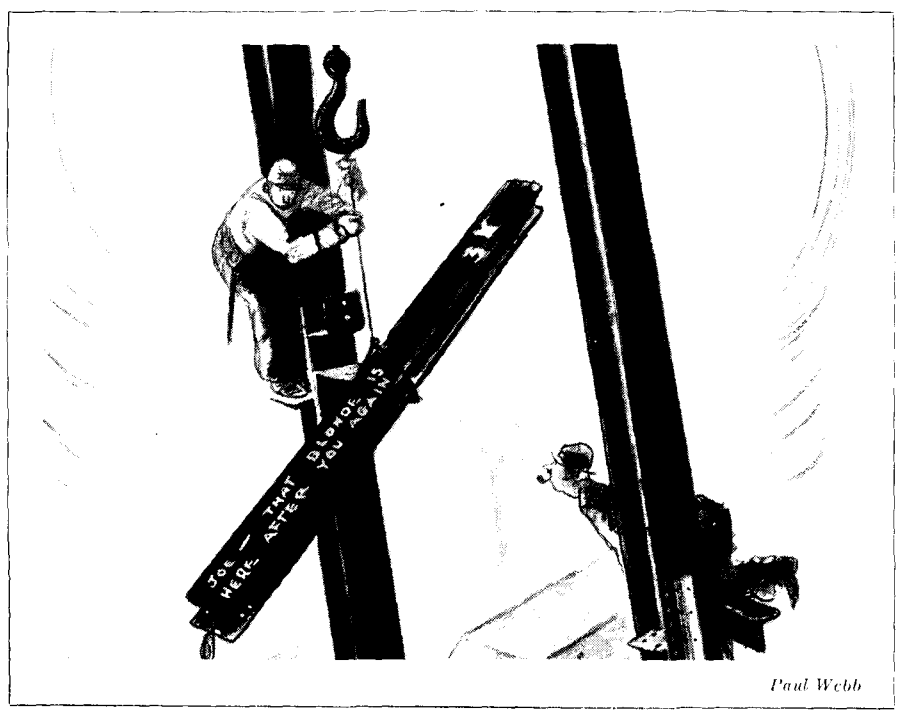
The young man introduced him to the others as Mr. Cutter. There were three executors of Hadley's estate, and the sheriff, and the surrogate, and the young man, who did not state his interest in the occasion.

"Mr. Cutter," one of the executors said, "we wish that you would write your signature for us."

"I'd be glad to," Talbot said. "If you'll give me pen and paper I'll write my signature."

The surrogate asked Talbot to sit at his desk. He laid out a clean sheet of paper and a pen and a bottle of ink.

Talbot picked up the pen and wrote "John T. Cutter" in an unfaltering hand. One of the executors looked over his shoulder in his eagerness to see the signature.



Paul Webb

The surrogate took up the sheet on which he had written. The executors compared it with the signatures they had. They looked at one another and nodded. One of them spoke:

"We're satisfied, Mr. Cutter. I believe we shall have to call in a handwriting expert before we can actually give you the money. But we believe that will be nothing more than a formality."

Talbot smiled. It was too easy.

"Surrogate," the man continued, "I think you might read the communication of Arthur Wakefield Hadley."

THE surrogate took an envelope out of his safe.

"What I am about to read," he said, "is a letter from Arthur Wakefield Hadley to John T. Cutter." He paused and looked around the room. He read:

"'Dear John:

"'I am leaving you a hundred thousand dollars on one condition. But before I state that condition I wish to go back a little.

"'You will remember the night that Edith disappeared. She had confessed to me that evening. We talked until long after midnight. I forgave her. I loved her. I had to forgive her. She went to bed in her bedroom and I in mine. I couldn't sleep. I heard your whistle outside. I heard her come into my bedroom to see if I was asleep. I closed my eyes. She went downstairs. When I heard her shut the front door I jumped out of bed. I followed her.

"'She met you and you walked down to the park along the river. I couldn't hear what you said or what she said. But sometimes I could hear your tones. I knew that you were trying to force her to do something and she was refusing. You and she got into a boat and went out on the river. I waited until dawn and then I went home.

"'You were at the hotel the next morning as usual. You were astounded when I told you Edith had disappeared. You knew nothing about it. I told no one else about it—then.

"'I knew who had taken the bonds out of my safe. I went before the grand jury and gave the evidence and they indicted you. I never did find out how you managed to get them back. But you managed it. So that's that. You left town a free man.

"'I found Edith's body. I was alone. I cut the rope. I never told anyone that when I found her there was a rope around her ankles with twenty pounds of iron on the other end. I couldn't endure to have the world know the story of her infidelity. But I can endure it when I am dead.

"'Therefore, I am leaving you a hundred thousand dollars on one condition. That condition is that you convince a jury that you are innocent of Edith's murder.'"

Talbot jumped up. "It's a lie," he said hoarsely. "I'm not John T. Cutter."

The sheriff took him by the arm. "You'll have plenty of chance to prove who you are, Mr. Cutter," he said. "But just now you'd better come with me."

"Unless," the surrogate said, "Mr. Cutter would rather listen to the affidavits Arthur Wakefield Hadley left."

The young man who had called Talbot "John" got up. "I think the sheriff has the right idea," he said. He turned to Talbot. "I'm the prosecuting attorney," he said. "You will hear the evidence later—in court."

★

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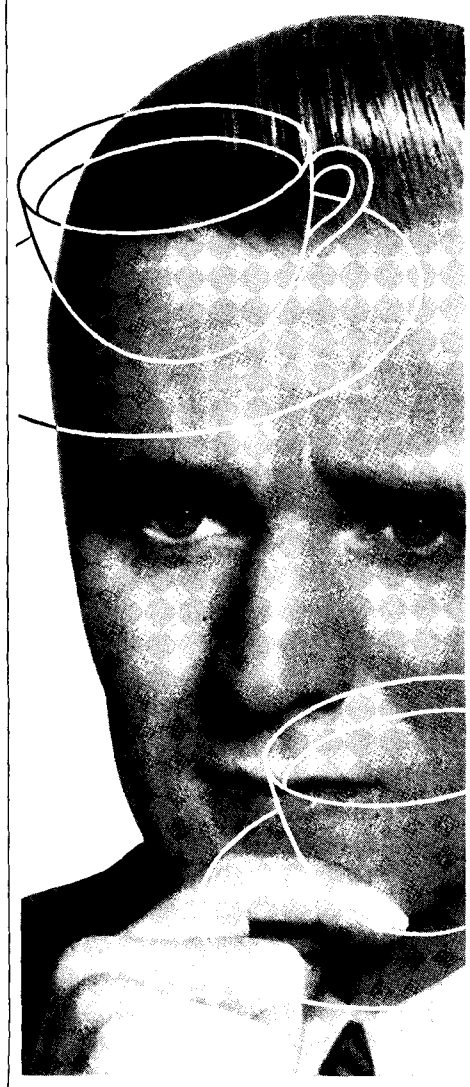

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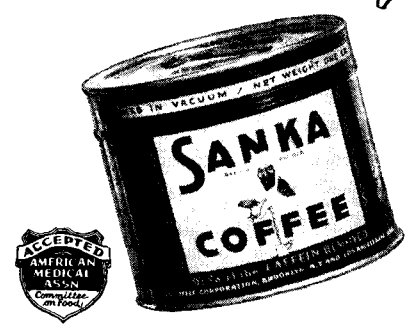

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The Great Abduction

Continued from page 26

and—well, we let him have it. We were trying to get the drop on him quietly, and it didn't work. A fast thinker. How's the big fellow?"

"Okay," Meridew replied. "If you ask me, I think he's enjoyed the whole business. When I see you, I'll tell you how he finished them off. Here he is now."

For he saw Brockridge beside him.

"Hello, Gerryman," said Brockridge, taking the phone. The President was silent a moment, a minute, two minutes. He looked, with a grimace, at Meridew. "Certainly, Gerryman," he finally said. "Here's Treherne."

He passed the receiver to the secret service chief and walked away. Meridew, in response to a nod, followed him.

"Remember when teacher scolded you?" asked Brockridge.

Meridew, not understanding, nodded.

"That's how I feel—like the small boy," grinned Brockridge. "I'm not to drive fast to Bangor. I'm to be sure that the plane is safe. I'm to land at Roosevelt Field and not suddenly decide to go to Montreal. Well, Treherne?"

"They got Bramer. They're going to get DiSalvo."

Isham called Bangor. In three minutes details had been settled.

"Go to the airport," he said. "My man, Vince Clary, will be waiting. It will take you four or five hours to reach Bangor, unless Fred has a fast car."

"It's a flivver," grinned the guide.

"And you take it easy. No hurry," said Treherne sternly. "And don't let the President drive. He'll want to, but—"

Brockridge grinned.

"I won't put Fred in the awkward position of refusing a request from the President," he promised. "I'll not ask to drive."

Treherne stared at him.

"Until you're back in New York, I wouldn't feel awkward about refusing any request," he stated. "You're a *responsibility*, Mr. President, but you don't seem to realize it."

Mark Brockridge was too discerning a man to scent rudeness where none was meant.

"I realize it, Treherne," he said. "I realize it more than ever in my life before. And Treherne, and you, Isham, and Johnny and Fred and Meridew and Miss Dale—you have all been magnificent. I am sincerely and deeply grateful. And now, Treherne, I want to say good-by to Brouillard."

THE courtesy took only a moment, but for all of Brouillard's life the moment would live as his greatest. Brockridge had the gift of making people adore him, and Meridew was made aware of this on the ride to Bangor. The President insisted on riding in the front seat with Fred, and the way in which he met the guide on his own ground was quite remarkable. Having fished adjacent waters, Brockridge could speak familiarly of the habits of the fish, but the manner in which he deferred to the guide's judgment and knowledge was revelatory. No wonder the man had achieved high office and tremendous popularity. He listened, Meridew could tell, to experts. And inasmuch as no man can hope to know all about everything, that one who accepts guidance is the one who achieves most.

Although he sat in front, Brockridge had borrowed a slouch hat, and kept it pulled well down over his eyes, and recognition was never near. He didn't ignore the occupants of the back seat, but drew them into the talk frequently. But when it seemed that the young couple were engrossed with each other, no interruption came from the front of the car.

Fred, at a word from the President, pulled up beyond a lunch stand, and returned with sandwiches and milk, which they devoured at the side of the road. And then, a couple of hours after luncheon, they pulled up at the Bangor airport.

Clary was waiting for them, and had his plane situated so that they could enter it without attracting attention.

MERIDEW was not troubled with airsickness on this trip. He fell asleep almost instantly, and did not awake until the plane grounded on Roosevelt Field.

A man whom he recognized as Samuels, accompanied by three other men, hemmed them in as they alighted. Five minutes later Brockridge had departed in one car, and Meridew and Myrna Dale were in another. And sometime later he deposited her at her apartment and went to his own.

Incoherencies had trembled on his lips, but he had not permitted them utterance. She had been through too much. Perhaps, indeed, she had come to some understanding with Brockridge. The latter might have ridden in the front seat all the way from Wamsemuck to Bangor merely in order that Meridew might not suspect a secret which perhaps they wished to guard for a while. But suspicion of this would not have kept him from trying his own fortune. However, tact, regard for her exhausted condition, did.

And so he went up to his penthouse, to greet Gerryman.

Tilly Gentry greeted her guest enthusiastically.

"You were always famous, Ken," she said. "Everyone reads your column, or, if they don't, they pretend to, and that in itself is a compliment, isn't it? But now," she rattled on, "you're more than famous. You're a great figure in the news. Imagine my shy Ken rounding up drug-runners, and having people killed in his apartment, and—oh, everything, Ken. You're really a detective, aren't you?"

"Everything is part of a good newspaper man's life, you know," he responded.

He hated the half-lies he would be forced to tell for years to come. But it was better, from every angle, that the kidnapping of Brockridge be kept as secret as possible. Bramer and one other man were dead. DiSalvo had swiftly pleaded guilty to violation of the laws forbidding the importation of narcotics. So had the men captured in Maine, and another man named Grannan. They had—to the amazement of the public and press—refused attorneys and pleaded guilty. Justice had been swift. They were all in Atlanta Penitentiary now. For, as Gerryman had explained to Meridew, if they didn't plead guilty to a crime they had not committed, Brockridge was determined to have them punished for the crime of which they had been guilty. And as Bramer was the only one that could have been convicted of murder, and he was dead, the kidnappers had received punishments as severe as if they had been prosecuted for kidnapping. For the next twenty years they would not be menaces to the country which they had outraged.

But Meridew was sick of answering questions which could not be truthfully answered. He had told Ned Dabney that he thought he'd go abroad, and Dabney, in view of certain interesting foreign happenings, was enthusiastic about the idea.

But ten days had elapsed since he had seen Myrna Dale. He had telephoned repeatedly, to learn that she was out. He had even written her a note, a cheerful, friendly little note, asking when he might see her. And she had vouchsafed no reply.

This was rather shabby treatment, he felt. He went over, again and again, his talks with her, to find out where he could have given offense. But on the night of the kidnapping she had said, in almost so many words, that she didn't blame him for having told Gerryman his suspicions of her.

She couldn't be the type to feel resentment, later on, at his lack of perfect faith in her. He hadn't lacked that. But it had been his *duty* to tell Gerryman anything, no matter how gravely it might reflect on anyone, that might in any way serve to help the search for the President.

But women were queer creatures. She might resent it. And—this bothered him—she might have decided to marry Brockridge, and her avoidance of Meridew might be due solely to preoccupation with her love. For it was not inconceivable that she and the President had become engaged.

"Who's here?" he asked Tilly.

"Not a soul but Myrna Dale. Jack says he's fed up with big crowds over the week-ends. Just wanted you two, so we could have a little golf, bridge if we want it—Myrna's down by the beach."

"I—I think I'll stroll down and see her," said Meridew.

"I thought you might," chuckled Tilly. "Good luck to you, Ken."

He blazed with color.

"Don't be silly, Tilly. What on earth—"

"You haven't seen her for a week or so, have you?"

"No. Why?"

"When a girl—a girl like Myrna—keeps away from a man, it's because—well, if the man doesn't know, he doesn't deserve to know. Run along."

HE RAN along; he actually speeded up his walk until it was almost a trot. Tilly, bless her heart, must know something. He reached the wall that held back the storms of winter. He looked over. Myrna Dale sat on the sand below. He vaulted the wall and dropped six feet, with a thud, beside her.

She looked up with a startled exclamation. He sat down beside her.

"Myrna, haven't you been rather mean with me?"

"I guess I have," she admitted instantly.

"Why?" he asked.

"I wanted time to think," she said.

"And you have thought?"

"I came out here—knowing you'd be here," she replied.

She leaned away from his groping arms.

"It—seemed so ridiculous—meeting a man, and—thinking of love at once. I—didn't want to. I'd always thought that—caring for anyone would be a matter of time, of slow friendship and natural growth. But it seems—it seems that I was wrong."

She whitened.

"Perhaps I'm saying too much, assuming too much—"

But the rapturous clasp in which he enfolded her was proof to the contrary.

THE END

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You can't Console a Camel

Continued from page 20

perch onto the rocks of the desert; and all he could do was to cling on with hands and legs, while the very teeth in his head rattled. He lost his hat almost at once, and the burning sun nearly boiled such brains as he possessed; while a terrible thirst, made acute by the sight of the champagne, consumed him. . . .

I chanced to see him at the door of the hotel, where Laura had consented at last to stop and kneel down. He was almost crying with vexation and pain; his face was scarlet; his eyes were wild, and he had hiccoughs. Indeed, I could not blame him when he tottered round to Laura's rear and gave her a kick which drew a wail of agony from him but did not much worry Laura. She merely looked round at him with reproachful eyes, and uttered her usual outraged and melancholy moan.

Later in the day, when the party returned, I was able to calculate that she had made the journey at a record pace; and I bought her.

Mounting the Mountain

Like all camels, Laura was supremely stupid. For instance, she could never be taught to understand that she must remain crouched until her rider was in the saddle, and must not scramble to her feet just at the moment when he was mounting. A camel's saddle is a sagging square of leather covered with a thick sheepskin, and is supported on a high, padded framework which fits around the hump and is fastened by a girth under the body. The rider sits on this lofty throne with his legs crossed in front of him on the curve of the camel's neck, which is his footstool.

A camel crouches with his forelegs bent inwards under him and, if you are not alone, somebody puts his foot on the bent joint and the camel will not rise until you are settled in the saddle and its leg is released. Then up you go, lurching forward as the back legs rise, and lurching backward as the forelegs follow suit.

A camel, by the way, can do more than look at you out of the corner of an eye: it can turn its head completely around and stare you full in the face with both eyes. I do not know anything more disconcerting than this. There you are, sitting high up on the hump and prodding the creature's neck with your stick, that being the only way to guide it, since the rope is for checking the pace; and suddenly, when these prods have become intolerable, round comes the head, and two lovely, mournful eyes gaze at you with a mixture of loathing, contempt, accusation and despair. You can only say "I beg your pardon"; but that look has shown you that your apology will not be accepted. As a human being you are beyond pardon.

Once, while I was still young at the business, I told Laura to kneel while we were descending the slope of a hill; and, her stupidity being even greater than mine, she did so. The slope, however, was so steep that her back legs left the ground, and for a frightful moment she was balanced upon her front knees, with her hind quarters in the air. Those who were watching said that the thing was unique in their experience; but Laura *was* unique.

On another occasion I was using her in carrying two heavy boxes held in rope nets, one on either side of the saddle, when the ropes on the right side gave way and that box fell to the ground. The weight of the other box caused her two right legs to leave the ground, and there she was, hopping round in circles on her two left legs. This again was declared to be unparalleled.

There are, of course, two kinds of camels. One is the Bactrian, which has two humps and long, shaggy hair; but the kind used in Egypt is the Arabian, which has only one hump and has short, sandy-colored or whitish hair. The hump is a store of fatty flesh which is reabsorbed when necessary into the general system; when the camel is well-fed the hump is hard and big; when food is scarce it sags and looks empty.

In the stomach there is a water reserve which holds more than a gallon, the moisture being passed into the body gradually when there is no drinking water to be had. That is why camels are so valuable for desert journeys; and, indeed, they have obviously evolved in the desert, for their flat, padded feet are designed for treading on soft sand or hard rocks, and their nostrils are furnished with muscles which can close them in a sandstorm.

It is not customary to allow a riding camel to walk, because the motion is rolling and unpleasant and you lurch from side to side in a sickly manner, which suggests a reason for calling the camel the "ship of the desert." It is usual to keep up a quick jog-trot, for in this case you simply hump up and down in the saddle like a cavalry trooper, the humps becoming bigger and better as the pace increases to a gallop.

Laura, however, used to add to the fun by occasionally jumping over low rocks and clumps of scrub, a habit she must have inherited from her father; but she never fell. In fact, I have never heard of a camel falling, for they can throw their long legs out in any direction on the instant, and though they trip they never come down.

Laura had a keen sense of smell and could detect water several miles away. When I saw her stretch her neck out and felt her increasing her pace, I knew that we were nearing a well; and, indeed, this ability once pretty well saved my life, for I happened to lose my way when riding alone far ahead of my caravan, and was wandering about hopelessly amongst the rocky valleys and open spaces, picturing the tortures of death by thirst, when suddenly she pointed her head down the wind and went off at a gallop, and soon we reached the well which was our rendezvous.

In these expeditions in search of the ancient secrets of the desert, I used to take perhaps a dozen camels with me to carry the camping equipment and the portable tanks of water; and this little caravan would set out with the camel men as soon as the tents were struck in the morning, and would travel at a walking pace. I and those who were riding with me would start a little later, overtake the caravan during the morning, be overtaken again while we rested for lunch, get ahead once more during the afternoon, and arrive at the rendezvous some hours before them. When one thus travels with baggage and water, thirty-five miles a day is good going.

Laura's Pet Hates

When the way was difficult and the Bedouin guide was riding with me, I used to drop torn scraps of paper as I went, in the manner of a paper-chase; and the others could thus follow us more easily than they could by their own method of following the spoor—often an uncertain business when one is crossing country also traversed by occasional Bedouin tribesmen.

But Laura always thought I was insulting her when I tossed a handful of paper scraps onto the path; out of the corner of her eye she saw them fluttering to the ground, and she used to bound forward or leap sideways, uttering a whimper of vexation, or else she would turn her head right around and pinch the toe of my boot with her yellow teeth. Desert partridges also annoyed her, and whenever we flushed a covey and they went whirring off like rockets she used to stop dead and bleat her indignation. Jackals, however, she treated with contempt.

Poor, discontented, old Laura! When I retired from my job in Egypt I sold her to an English friend; and I suppose she is still alive, for camels live for thirty, forty and even fifty years.

The last time I saw her she was eating her beans in the warm sunshine, and ought to have been happy enough; but not a bit of it!—she groaned and complained most bitterly when I and my friend approached her, and her despairing eyes were full of unutterable wrongs.

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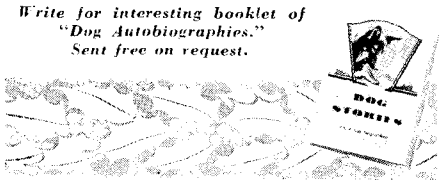

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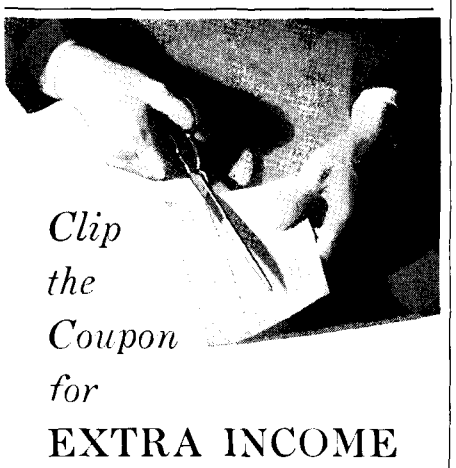

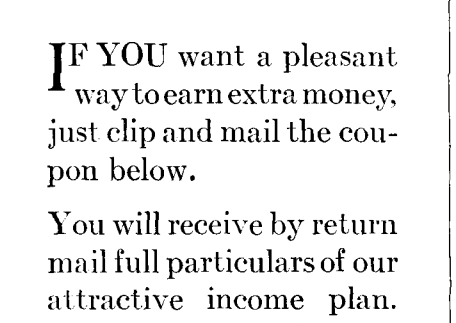

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Up and Down with Sam Insull

Continued from page 29

would readily see that Middle West shares were then selling on the Chicago Stock Exchange for $350 a share. Of course you would exercise your rights to buy for $200. These rights were issued each year. Millions of dollars poured into the Insull offices. But you must see one thing very clearly. To work this system, the price of the stock must be kept up on the market. You wouldn't exercise your right, if the price of the stock fell below 200 or was going down near 200. And this is the fatal fact. It means that the man who depends on this method must always keep the price of his stocks up. He is doomed to be forever a bull.

Now we may see Fate at work upon the Insull edifice. In the summer of 1929 he did put out this issue of 450,000 "rights." Middle West was selling for $350 a share. All looked lovely. Insull was busy preparing for the opening of his great opera house. Then suddenly the storm broke. The fatal day—October 24, 1929—when the era of eternal prosperity came to an end, saw the stock crash. Middle West stocks started down. Insull, by this new issue of rights, proposed to raise around $90,000,000—a huge sum. October 24th, when the crash came, Middle West was selling for 350. A week later it sold for 300. Insull's financing had to be completed by November 15th. By November 9th Middle West was down to 240 and falling fast.

Temporarily Safe

Insull sat in his office those days, querulous, excited, angry, torn between the coming pageant of the opera opening and the necessity of keeping his stock from falling below 200. He kept at the telephone. His brokers in La Salle Street were instructed to keep the price above 220. He had to pour millions into the market to peg the stock above this price. To get those millions he had to get immense loans from his banks and to pledge the stocks of his various companies.

The night of the opening of the opera Insull got bad news in his box. One of his brokers went to him when the lights were down and told him of the wave of selling which carried prices down that day and of the millions needed to support the market. Two days later the financing was all completed and Insull was safe—for the time being.

Then came the disastrous year of 1930. This year Insull had heavy financing to do for Commonwealth and Public Service of Northern Illinois. The prices of all stocks were toppling. Dark forebodings of the coming depression filled La Salle Street. But Insull shut his ears to them. His profound belief in the everlasting day of prosperity remained unshaken. While other industrialists trimmed their sails, Insull put out more canvas. He planned improvements amounting to $120,000,000. He bought more and more utility companies. In anticipation of needing more funds he continued to peg the price of Commonwealth Edison, Public Service and Peoples Gas on the Chicago Stock Exchange. He borrowed incessantly.

Then came rumors of mysterious fights. The world loves the stories of reckless battles on the stock exchange—giant traders flinging millions of dollars onto the floor to capture control of some company. There had been tales of battles between Insull and Lowenstein; between Insull and Cyrus Eaton.

The Cleveland financier was supposed to be buying furiously shares in the Commonwealth, Peoples Gas and Public Service. Insull is pictured as meeting the challenge and hurling his millions in against Eaton.

What actually happened is even more dramatic—more significant, more unusual than a stock-market fight. Insull was buying all stocks offered, right and left, to hold prices up. Eaton, who needed money, was smart enough to see this. He had plenty of stocks but most of them were going down fast. The one that was remaining up was the Insull stock. Eaton saw Insull was pegging his stocks. So he decided to unload on him, to let Insull buy at the high price. Instead of Eaton buying against Insull, he was really dumping stocks on him.

Insull borrowed huge sums to make these purchases. But he hadn't bargained on such immense offerings as this. He could not permit the stocks to sag in price. He didn't see how he could continue to support the market. So he sent for Eaton. The Cleveland banker declared himself ready to settle at 350 a share. He had about 150,000 shares at the time and Insull balked, but Eaton threatened to dump them all on the market and break the price of Insull's stocks. Insull capitulated. He paid Eaton about $40,000,000 in cash and the rest in shares of Insull Utilities and a newly organized trust—Corporation Securities.

After this he was no longer able to support the market. He had not the means. The prices of all stocks were swept down in the avalanche of liquidation which shook every stock exchange. As the prices of his stocks went down, the banks from which he had borrowed money clamored for more collateral. Insull had to put up more and more stocks until finally he had pledged practically every share belonging to all his corporations. In the end Insull Utilities Investments, Inc., had assets which had shrunk to $36,000,000 and liabilities of $226,000,000. This is a sample of what happened to these other corporations. Everything had been pledged to get money to keep up the price of stocks on the stock market. Pegging the market was the implement which delivered the final mortal thrust.

But in the latter part of 1931, as the great structure quivered to its fall, these were desperate men. All of them had been heavy operators in the stock market. Their brokers clamored for more and more margin and they had not the cash to furnish it. Martin Insull had a brace of accounts. One group was carried through a dummy name. It held stocks which had cost over $268,000. The brokers demanded more stocks or money as margin. Martin simply sent a check of the Middle West Company to the brokers, took up the stocks, and then distributed them among twelve Middle West subsidiaries.

A Fallen King Weeps

Marshall Sampsell, one of Insull's chief aides, president of Central Illinois Public Service, took $400,000 of securities from its vaults to margin one of his accounts. Sam Insull himself made a check for several hundred thousand dollars of Middle West money to pay up one of his brother's accounts. No, it was not the depression which destroyed the Insull empire. It was Samuel Insull himself, transformed from a perfectly good utility operator into an insatiable and reckless promoter by the poison of easy profit.

When the end came Insull's structure was gutted. The financiers of Chicago and New York knew this. But the Middle West was put into the hands of receivers and Sam Insull himself was made one of the receivers. Within a few weeks the first audit of the books revealed the market operations of Martin Insull. The two receivers told Sam Insull of their discovery. Insull wept. A troubled and painful scene followed. Then, in the presence of Sam, the receivers sent for Martin. In his old office in the Middle West building they tried to let him out easily. He was, however, a bit truculent and demanded to know the reason. "Because you have mismanaged the company in the most outrageous way," declared the bluff McCulloch. Sam sat silent. A few weeks later it was discovered that Sam Insull himself had signed the checks which had paid Martin's account.

The Flight

The discovery was truly upsetting. The Middle West directors were informed. They held a meeting in one of the leading banks and discussed the course to be followed. Late in the afternoon, Stanley Field, one of their number and an old friend of Insull's, walked across the Loop to Insull's office. Whatever he told Insull, the result was Insull's resignation in all his companies and his immediate flight from Chicago.

One may well ask why Samuel Insull was permitted to leave Chicago then. I was in Chicago a few days later. On all sides I heard nothing but sympathy and kindly words for the fallen financier. Thousands of people in the city had lost almost everything they owned through his operations. I found also a disposition everywhere to shield him. I asked in half a dozen responsible places: "Why was Samuel Insull permitted to leave Chicago?" The crime for which he was later indicted was known. Instead of detaining him, that day the three companies from which he resigned met and voted him a pension of $50,000 a year. It was only later it was reduced to $18,000.

If Insull should ever be brought to book for the crime alleged against him, people will say, doubtless, the offense has been expiated. But in truth very little has been done about the real cause of the trouble. Al Capone at large with his machine gun in Chicago was hardly more dangerous to society than Sam Insull at large armed with the unsupervised power to issue securities in his holding companies.

There is one obscure suit pending against Insull filed by one other Chicago citizen. He is an old clerk in Marshall Field's, past sixty-five years of age. He has been saving for forty years and accumulated $25,000 by 1929. At the advice of his banker he was induced to invest every nickel of it in the debentures of Insull Utilities. Today that $25,000 is gone and the clerk faces old age without the fund he so patiently built up over so many years.

It was this man's money with which Insull endowed operas, orphanages, hospitals. And he is a very bitter man today. So are scores of thousands of other men and women of small means who put their money into Insull's hands and who now see him enjoying a pension for life. However, the important thing to do is not to punish him, as he is in a way as much a victim of the system as those he ruined. The thing to do is to deal with the implement by which Insull was enabled to carry forward his amazing and ruinous adventure.

THE END

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I'll Bet You Myself

Continued from page 23

sit on the piazza. William sat facing her.

"I hoped you'd have the decency to stay away tonight," she said. "Hasn't the joke gone far enough?"

"But it never has been a joke. I fell in love with you last November."

"Last November? I don't understand. Oh, I see, you're thinking of another girl."

"No, it was you, on a Thursday in November, on a Fifth Avenue bus in New York. I got on at Seventy-second Street and sat opposite you. I've been in love with you ever since."

"What a tale! Does that kind of thing happen to you often?"

"It has happened just once, and—"

There was the patter of two pair of feet on the piazza steps and the chorus of two young voices:

"There's a big fire on the Stockton road! *Please* take us."

There is nothing that quite equals a fire in a child's eyes. Mary of course understood that. "Get in the car, all of you," she cried and dashed into the house and there told a maid to telephone Mrs. Riggs that her two youngest children were being taken to the fire.

It was quite a fire, an old dilapidated summer hotel. It burned brilliantly and rapidly, but not too rapidly, for it was after ten o'clock when William and Mary drove the Riggs children home. As they drove away Mary looked at her wrist watch and compared it with the clock in William's car. William saw and understood.

WHEN they reached her house Mary said: "It was a grand fire. It burned up that option, among other things. It was nice of you to forget all about it."

"Mary, isn't it time to stop joking? I love you and—"

"I'm not in love with *you* and—"

"Couldn't you ever be?"

"No, I don't think so. But suppose I did fall in love with you eventually or just decided to marry you anyway as the best I could do for myself and then found you'd changed your mind and wouldn't have me; then where would I be? How about giving *me* an option on *you?*"

"What will you give for it?"

"What consideration was there for the one you had on me?"

"That was a debt of honor. I'll play you for your option against another on you."

"On the same basis as before?"

"What odds do you want?"

"Eight bisques."

"All right. Tomorrow morning."

SOMETHING happened to William during the night, somewhere in the vicinity of his left shoulder blade. It spoiled his game. So it came about that, on the very last hole, Mary had only to make a twelve-foot putt to win her option.

"A putt for a human soul," she said and played, and the ball went in.

Mary laughed.

"The option expires at ten o'clock tonight," William said.

"It does, does it? I think not. A year from tonight, perhaps."

"Ask the Judge."

"I'll ask no judge. It's my option and I'll decide when it expires; it's your turn to worry."

And that was as far as William's best arguments got him, and they lasted all the way to the bathing beach. There Mary sat on the sand by William.

"You still insist there's no time limit on that option?" he asked.

"A year or two ought to be enough. And how about letting me have a financial statement and a copy of your family tree?"

"You should have gotten them before you took the option."

"Polly Riggs will tell all I want to know. I'm going in." And in she went.

Just then the Doctor turned up and William told him about his shoulder. The Doctor moved William's arm about and stuck his fingers here and there in William's back and told him he had probably caught cold in a muscle and to bake it with an electric pad.

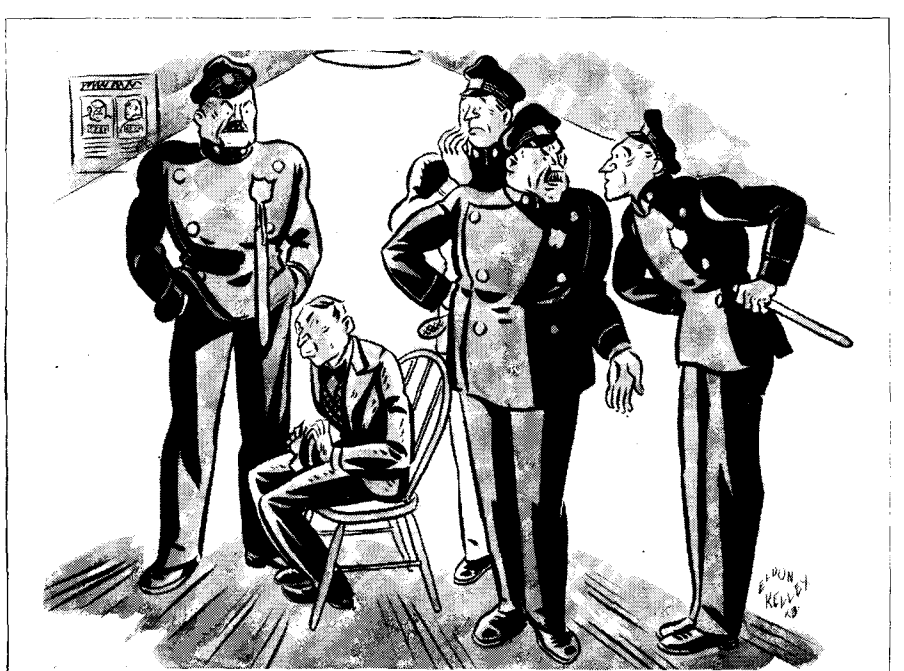
William swam out to the float and there asked Mary if she would like to sail down to Jonesboro that afternoon.

"Yes, unless a friend of mine isn't busy. If he is, I'll be on the dock at half past two. I'll telephone you before two."

"What's your friend doing tonight?"

"Oh, I forgot. Mother wants you to come to dinner tonight. She suggested it when I told her about the option. You'll come, won't you?"

"Of course I'll come."



"Aw, gee! He had to confess too soon and spoil all the fun"

Eldon Kelley

Mary telephoned before two that she could not go to Jonesboro, and that left William with an afternoon on his hands. He got through it by taking the two Riggs children for a sail. Dinner at the Wests' was a perfectly conventional affair, the only untoward incident being Mr. West's statement that Mary had that afternoon driven him up the coast to call on an old friend of his.

After dinner Mr. and Mrs. West eventually settled down to read indoors, which suited William. It took a bit of diplomacy to get Mary down to the rocks but eventually he succeeded. Then he said:

"Are you going to be serious tonight? Are you—"

"What's the matter with your arm?"

"Nothing much."

"There was something the matter with it this morning. You couldn't hit your shots right and I saw Dr. Jackson looking at it on the beach afterward. Why didn't you say something about it?"

"Alibi stuff? It was just the fortune of war."

"You can call it anything you like but I'm not keen about winning golf matches—and options—that way. You can consider the option canceled."

"It doesn't make any difference whether you cancel the option you won or not—you have one anyway."

"All right; I'll hang on to it for what it's worth, but I might as well have an option on Vesuvius."

"Vesuvius wouldn't furnish food and lodging," William suggested.

"I have those now. If I'm to change the source of supply I want the source exactly right."

"I gather that I'm not right."

"No, you're not. You have your good points but I could never marry a fop."

"A fop! I a fop?"

"ANY young man who carries a shiny yellow walking stick—malacca, isn't it?—with an ivory head, is a fop."

"I've never had a walking stick in my life," William said.

"You had that yellow one on the Fifth Avenue bus last November." For a moment William stared at her and then he remembered.

"That ivory-headed walking stick belonged to my great-uncle," he said. "He'd left it at the house of a friend of mine where I was staying and I was taking it back to him at his club."

And then into William's chaotic brain a great light penetrated.

"You remember seeing me last November?"

"I remember seeing the yellow stick."

"And if I'd had it wrapped up, say in newspaper, would you have remembered?"

"Remembered what?"

"Me."

"You and the stick were together."

"And now we're not together and the stick is explained."

"Truthfully?"

"Absolutely."

"Then I'll have to think up some other reason for not marrying you."

"For heaven's sake, don't think too hard. You might dig up a monocle."

"Oh, bother, I can't think a bit. Why worry? It's all pure chance anyway. Are you sure you love me, disposition and all?"

"Positive, including your disposition."

"Then tell me—I don't know a thing about business—how do you take up an option?"

William explained how.

When is a cocktail not a cocktail?

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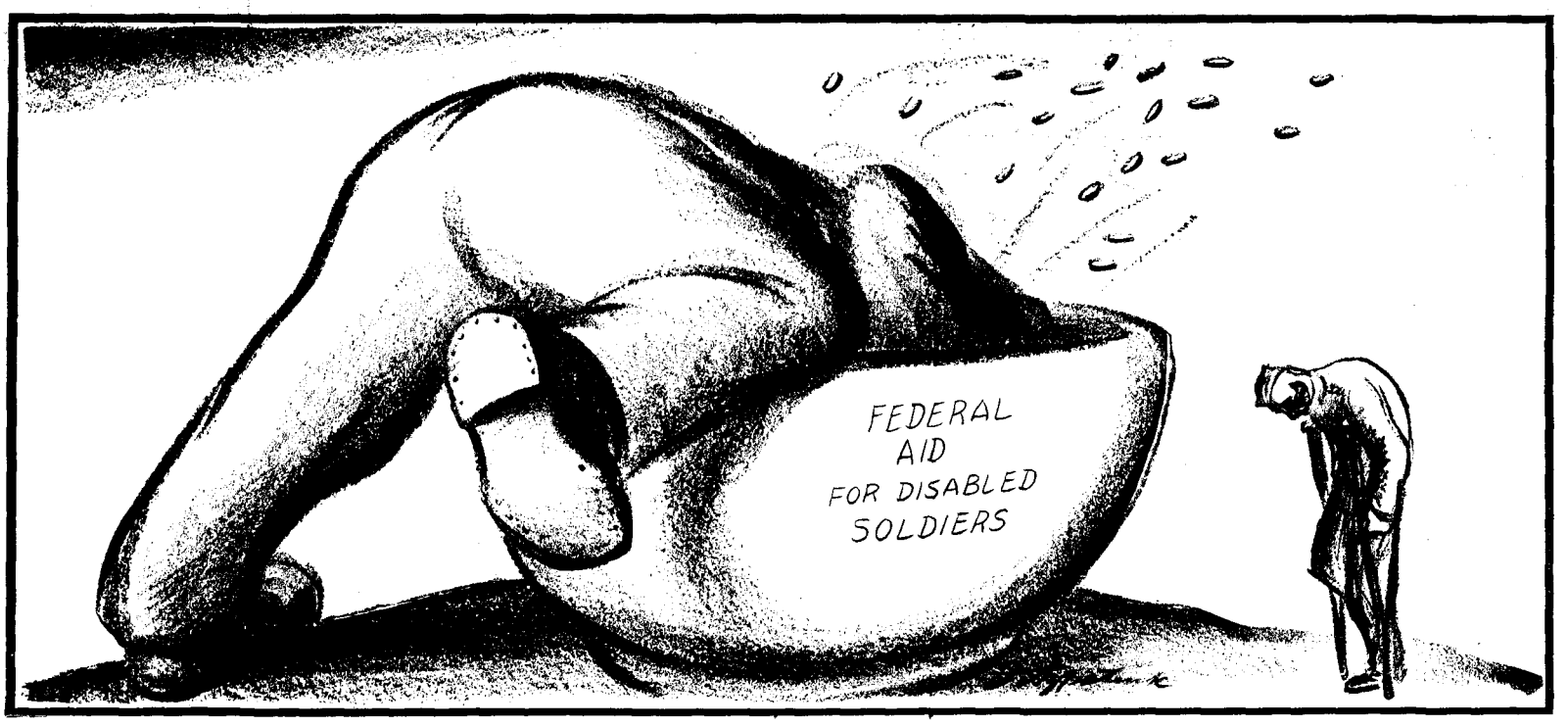

Dollar Patriots

THE only practicable way to reduce largely the expenses of the Federal government is to wipe out the disability allowances now being paid to men whose handicaps, real and imaginary, are in no way connected with war service.

Every veteran who was in fact wounded or injured fighting for his country is entitled to generous treatment at the hands of his government. The dependents of men killed in the war or handicapped by their war services must be cared for adequately. There is, however, neither justice nor reason in continuing the vast payments now being made to the ever-growing army of veterans whose claims are not founded on their war services.

The Congress now in its final session had a hand in writing the unjust and unconscionable laws by which this huge tribute is being taken. The laws were passed by the Democrats and Republicans who sought thus to win reëlection.

The representatives and senators now in Washington have been defeated or reëlected or have voluntarily retired. The Congress is, therefore, free for once in its life to put the national welfare first in its consideration. It can legislate for the nation and not for selfish groups.

The evil laws must be repealed. There is no better time than now to repeal them and no Congress better able to act.

The facts write the doom of the law. Last summer more than 375,000 veterans were drawing disability allowances for injuries not in any way due to war. They were being paid from twelve dollars to forty dollars a month. By June 30th next the number drawing such allowances, it was estimated by the Veterans Administration, will have increased to 561,000.

At the present time allowances and hospital care for these victims of peace cost nearly four hundred million dollars a year. This is a preposterous sum, utterly indefensible.

Everybody familiar with the Veterans Administration knows ridiculous examples of the extent to which this legal abuse has gone.

There is a doctor who draws full disability allowance and at the same time holds a well-paid job in the government service and still has the time and energy to carry on a large practice.

There is the plumbing fixture salesman whose case was related by Walter Davenport in a recent Collier's article. He developed a wry neck in 1924 and so got an award of fifty dollars a month.

Of course many ex-service men are unemployed and in need. So, too, are hundreds of thousands of others who were assigned by their draft boards to other duty. Why should the government discriminate between them when no war service is involved?

Is there any justice in giving the unemployed salesman who happened to be taken into the Army an allowance while his brother who worked on shells in a munitions factory is ignored?

Plainly, no. There is and there can be no justification for continuing these allowances.

We hear talk of the menace of the bonus and the menace is serious enough. We hear threats of additional legislation designed to make payments possible even to those who acquire social diseases in peace time.

These proposals will be defeated. That is not enough. The existing statutes must be purged.

Merely on the grounds of money alone the burden is too heavy to be carried. A fourth of our national revenue now is expended on veteran relief and unless the laws are changed the billion dollars spent on veterans this year will be three billions a year by 1942.

The money simply cannot be found.

The law can be changed and it must be changed. Patriotism is more than a claim check on the national treasury. The veterans who served well in time of need and who are not trading recently acquired symptoms for tax dollars resent this outrageous exploitation.

The lobbyists and the weaklings in Congress who so recklessly built up these legal raids on the treasury took too cynical a view of the American people.

We are ready in this country to recognize service and, in so far as money avails, to compensate those injured in the public service.

We are not ready, however, and we are not able if we were ready, to give life pensions to all of the four millions who were mobilized during the World War.

The men of this nation want work and not bounty. Jobs cannot be had if the Federal credit is impaired by this endless draining of the treasury. Taxes must be reduced, not increased, if business is to flourish and jobs become more plentiful.

The members of Congress understand this. The veterans laws were passed when times were easy and there seemed to be no limit to public expenditure. Long since, that time has passed. Now we must retrace the steps so carelessly taken.

First of all, the laws granting disability allowances to those whose handicaps are not due to their war service must be repealed. Next, careful consideration must be given to the entire body of veterans laws so that justice may be done the deserving and at the same time the financial integrity of the nation may be preserved.

The Seventy-second Congress has a grand opportunity to show courage and statesmanship in this great affair without fearing the reprisals which courage and statesmanship sometimes invite.

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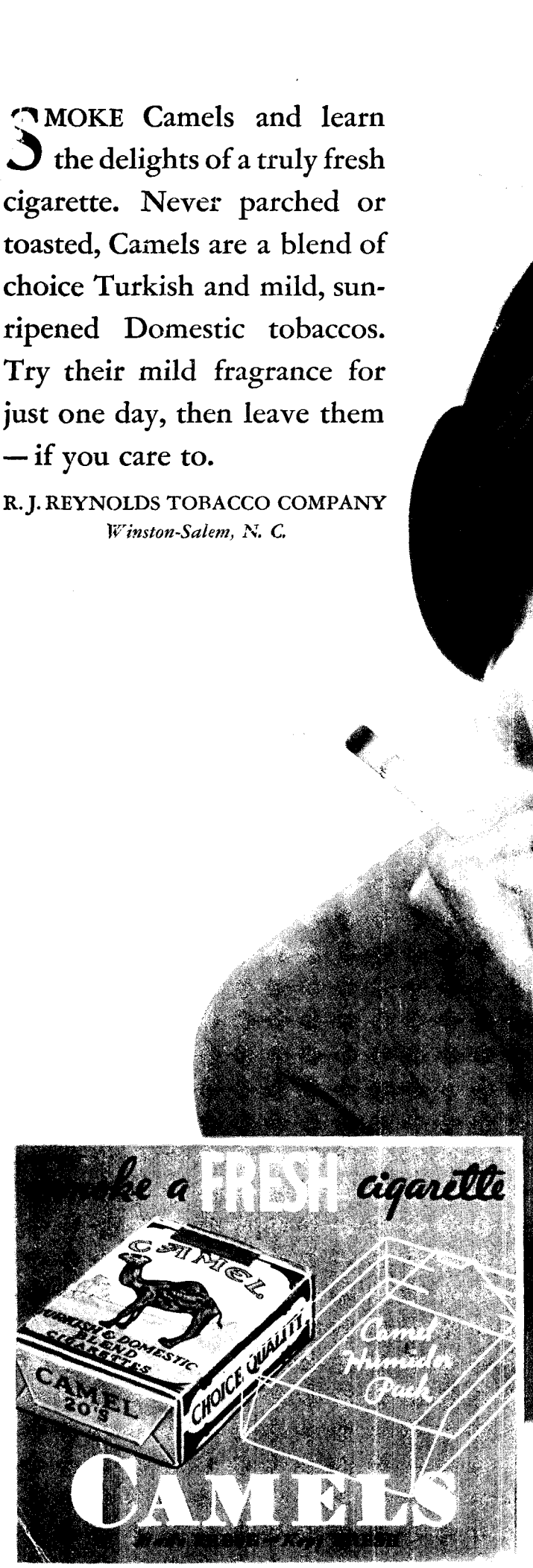

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